A frenchwoman's impressions of America.

A FRENCHWOMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA

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NEW YORK THE CENTURY CO. 1920

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INTRODUCTION

Les impressions de voyage en Amérique, que publient aujourd'hui “deux sœurs françaises,” méritent l'accueil chaleureux qui les attend: car ces impressions se sont formées et développées dans un tenace et courageux effort au service de la France.

Quand la Comtesse Madeleine de Bryas et sa sœur Jacqueline sont parties en 1918 pour les Etats-Unis, elles répondaient à l'appel du Comité Américain pour la France dévastée, à la tête duquel Miss Anne Morgan et Mrs. Dyke ont tant fait pour nos pays détruits. Il s'agissait, par un témoignage français, de solliciter de nouveaux concours et de réunir de nouveaux moyens.

Les deux voyageuses se sont brillamment acquittées de leur noble tâche. Mais, à peine arrivées à Washington, elles en ont, à ma demande, accepté une autre, qu'elles ont remplie avec un égal succès.

C'était l'heure du troisième “Emprunt de la Liberté.” Tout le pays américain, pour ce grand effort financier, avait été mobilisé. Les Alliés, pour qui les Etats-Unis travaillaient en même temps que pour eux-mêmes, apportaient à la campagne la coopération de leurs représentants.

Un détachement de chasseurs à pied, médaillés et vi chevronnés, appelé par moi à New-York, avait ouvert le feu parmi les acclamations. Tous les soirs, mes collaborateurs et moi, ainsi que nos collègues alliés, nous prenions la parole, sous la présidence de nos amis américains, dans les clubs, les églises, les théâtres, les usines.

D'accord avec mon ami, George Creel, Président du Comité d'Information Publique, je demandai aux “deux sœurs françaises” de mettre au service de la grande cause leur grâce et leur dévouement. Deux jours après, elles partaient pour une tournée, d'abord consacrée à l'emprunt, ensuite étendue à l'œuvre immense d'éducation populaire, qui a été une des sources de la victoire.

Six mois durant, elles ont parcouru les Etats-Unis, faisant plus de 200 Conférences aux quatre coins de l'Union, parlant le jour, parlant le soir, sautant d'un train dans un autre, résistant en souriant à l'épreuve physique et morale d'un surmenage dont demeurait étonné le peuple le plus résistant du monde, et recueillant—ce chiffre vaut mieux que tous les éloges—pour plus de 5 millions de souscriptions.

La Comtesse Madeleine de Bryas était l'orateur de la “troupe,” dont sa sœur était le directeur. Parlant l'anglais aussi facilement que le français à son arrivée—et, au départ, elle le disait du moins, plus facilement—riche des souvenirs rapportés par elle des régions martyres, elle excellait, par un vii simple récit, à saisir les auditoires les plus divers et qui mieux est, à les convaincre.

Un soir, dans une usine du *Middle West* , tous les ouvriers—plusieurs milliers—voulurent défiler devant elle et lui serrer les mains: beaucoup pleuraient. L'un d'eux lui dit: “Mon fils est en France. Maintenant que je vous ai entendue, je suis content qu'il y soit.”

Jamais meilleure action—non point de propagande, ce mot est haïssable,—mais d'information et de sympathie françaises n'a été, pendant la guerre, exercée aux Etats-Unis. Pendant près de deux années, mon personnel a prononcé plus de 15,000 discours en anglais, pour montrer aux Américains la vraie France et la situer à sa place dans la grande bataille. Nous sommes fiers d'avoir compté parmi nous ces deux charmantes “volontaires” si gaies à la besogne et si *efficient.*

Le récit de leur voyage est alerte et franc, comme elles-mêmes. Il n'y manque que la constatation des résultats obtenus et qui leur font grand honneur. J'ai plaisir à réparer l'oubli, qu'a voulu leur modestie, et à leur exprimer mon affectueuse reconnaissance.

André Tardieu Haut commissaire des affaires de guerre franco-americaine. Délégue français à la conférence de la paix.

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INTRODUCTION

The impressions received by “two French sisters” while travelling in America, and now published, will certainly meet with the warm welcome that they deserve, for they are the impressions formed and matured while engaged in strenuous work for the cause of France.

When the Comtesse Madeleine de Bryas and her sister Jacqueline went to the United States in 1918, it was in response to the request of the “American Committee for Devastated France,” at the head of which Miss Anne Morgan and Mrs. Dyke have accomplished so much for our destroyed districts. It was deemed appropriate at the time

that some French witness of conditions in such districts should solicit further help and means of continuing the work.

Brilliantly, indeed, did they discharge their splendid task. Also, almost immediately after their arrival in Washington at my request they agreed to undertake additional work, in which they acquitted themselves equally successfully.

This happened at the time of the third “Liberty Loan.” For this huge financial effort the whole of the United States had been called to action. The x Allies, for whom America was working at the same time that she was working for herself, eagerly enlisted the services of all their representatives for the campaign.

A detachment of the famous “Chasseurs à pied,” with their medals and chevrons, sent for by me, opened fire in New York amid frantic cheering. Every evening, my collaborators and I, together with colleagues among our allies, spoke at meetings held by our American friends in clubs, churches, theaters, and factories.

It was agreed with my friend George Creel, President of the Committee on Public Information, that I should ask the “two French sisters” to place their grace and their devotedness at the service of the great cause. Two days later they set out on a lecturing tour, in the first place to speak for the loan, and then continued as a means of carrying out the huge work of popular education, which proved to be one of the sources of victory.

For six months they travelled from one end of the United States to the other, giving more than two hundred lectures, speaking both during the day and the evening, and to do this they had to dash from one train to another, but they smilingly bore up bravely against all fatigue both physical and mental, against overwork and strain great enough to astonish even the Americans, who are known to be the hardest workers in the world, and gathering in xi for the cause—and the figure is the most eloquent of praises—more than five million francs in subscriptions.

The Comtesse Madeleine de Bryas was the speaker, while her sister acted as her manager. She arrived in America, speaking English as fluently as French, and left it,—or so she affirms,—speaking it even more so,—her memory stored with her many souvenirs from the martyred regions of her country, by the simple relating of which, she excelled in riveting the attention of the most varied audiences, and, what was still better, in convincing them.

One evening in a factory of the Middle West all the working people, numbering several thousand, wished to approach and shake hands: many of them were in tears. One said: “My son is in France. Now that I have heard you I am pleased that he should be there.”

There has not been better activity—not propaganda, the word is a hateful one, but information and French sympathy—exercised in the United States during the war. During almost two years my staff made more than fifteen thousand speeches in English, in order to show America the real France, and to give her her right place in the great battle. We are proud to have counted among us these two charming “volunteers,” who were so gay and withal so efficient at their task.

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The narration of their travels is vivacious and frank, as they are themselves. Yet, owing to their modesty there was something which had been omitted—to state the results of their work, which are of great honor to them. It is with pleasure that I now repair the omission, and at the same time express to them my affectionate gratitude.

André Tardieu Secretary for Franco-American War Affairs. Plenipotentiary of the French Republic at the Peace Conference.

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INTRODUCTION

It would perhaps be well to explain to possible readers that the “We” of the following pages refers to two sisters who have collaborated in writing down their experiences while travelling in the United States.

Although born, educated and having always lived in Paris, in addition to the fact that our father is French, we are proud of being able to claim direct descent from two Signers of the Declaration of the Independence of America. George Clymer, our mother's great-grandfather, and George Read, both being not only signers but also framers of the Constitution of the United States.

As already mentioned in this book we have tried to narrate in a very simple form our impressions of the wonderful country our good star led us to visit for the first time in 1918. We set out for the United States with the greatest love at heart for all that is American and we have returned to Paris with a still deeper admiration, an even greater sympathy if that were possible, and a more profound gratitude towards our sister-nation for all it has done for France.

Some of our impressions may perhaps seem rather frivolous to Americans. If so we ask such xiv of our readers kindly to remember that French minds often have a funny twist to them and that the French have a decided tendency to look upon life with lightness of heart, good-natured amusement and an unshakable optimism.

Before the war this apparent French frivolity was often severely criticized by foreigners, but since then events have certainly proved that these national traits were capable of becoming stolid qualities, as for over four years they kept up without any wavering whatsoever the morale of a whole nation down-trodden as it was by a merciless enemy.

We take advantage of this occasion to renew our most heartfelt thanks to all the Americans who entertained us with such warm hospitality during our stay in their country, thus giving us the feeling of having found a home wherever we went.

We have each written an equal number of pages, and after that confession are wondering with true feminine curiosity if our readers will be interested enough to be tempted to guess “who's who.”

Paris, 1920.

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A FRENCHWOMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA

A FRENCHWOMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA CHAPTER I PARIS BOMBARDED

EARLY one morning I was awakened by the sharp ringing of the telephone bell. I jumped out of bed.

“Hello! Who's, there? *Ah! c'est vous, chère amie!”* It was the Duchess X—“What is it? You want me to go to America? You must let me think it over! For it's a long way off, you know—quite at the other end of the world, in fact. But what will my parents say? And so Miss Anne Morgan is looking for a platform speaker to tour her country on behalf of the ‘ *pays dévastés* ’! And your husband has told her about my lecture trip to Spain two years ago. Yes, perhaps after all I could manage it, and, moreover, I have always longed to go to the United States.”

Perhaps it is owing to the fact of my mother being an American born that it comes natural to me 4 to decide rapidly; for I believe it is better to learn and maybe suffer through experience than refrain from acting. And so it happened that at two o'clock in the afternoon I met Miss Morgan for the first time. And it was decided that I should go to Blérancourt (Aisne), as soon as a permit could be obtained, and spend some time there in order to get thoroughly acquainted with the work of the Civilian Division of the American Fund for French Wounded. (It was many days before I could rattle off with any ease this interminable name.) I was then to start for America, to speak on behalf of the sixty villages that the French Government had placed under the superintendence of this organization.

“Don't say ‘yes,’” was Miss Morgan's parting advice, “until you are quite sure that you appreciate the relief work at Blérancourt thoroughly. Now I want you to understand from the beginning that in America you will have to play the part of a theatrical star. Yes, I really mean it,” she added, as she caught a look of amusement in my eye. “Over there everything is different; you will travel with a manager, speak from the stage, pose for photographers, be interviewed incessantly, and live entirely before the public.”

My ideas were already beginning to dance a cake-walk through my brain! I had never dreamed of being considered a “theatrical star.” What fun! 5 The war had certainly contrived to turn the whole world topsyturvy! I can imagine what my Parisian friends would have thought if before the war I had ventured to show myself daily on a stage and get talked of in the papers—quite an unheard of proceeding for a French *femme du monde!* Society would have ostracized me at once, and my friends would have been at home to me only when they were sure of having no one else in for tea. But now everything is allowed if only it be inspired by true patriotism, and even the deepest-rooted conventionalities seem to have dissolved into thin air.

There was only one drawback to the proposed expedition: I felt incapable of traveling alone in a far-away land without growing homesick. French people invariably get the blues

when they set foot on foreign soil, and I was sure I should die if I could not occasionally have a real “Frenchy” conversation.

“Why don't you come, too?” I asked my sister, after searching in vain for a suitable companion who would face the submarine risk. “We will chaperon each other, and you will do better work for our country over there, with me, than by taking care of blind soldiers at home.”

My father and mother, who are perfect dears, and who have nobody in the world to care for but their two daughters, agreed to our plans with the stoicism which has characterized parents during 6 this war. So the die was cast. We were to spend a few kaleidoscopic months amidst reporters, photographers, managers, “Easterners,” “Middle-Westerners,” and “Pacific-Coasters,” and see all the wonders of the new continent.

We were not the least bit excited over the thrilling prospect. We looked upon it rather in the light of a big and fatiguing undertaking after more than three years of strenuous work, but at that time only one thing counted in our hearts—that the Allies should win—and every individual effort that we made was a small stepping-stone in that direction.

So as soon as we got our passports from military headquarters, we set off for the war zone. How many times had I already traveled and motored through those devastated regions behind the firing-lines! My first tour of this kind was a week's sojourn in the Marne Valley in March, 1915, after which my aunt, the Marquise de Ganay, and I founded the society called “Le Bon Gite,” of which she is president. It is the largest French relief organization of its kind, and has never ceased to supply furniture to thousands of families in the ruined villages.

Miss Morgan's and Mrs. Dike's organization at Blérancourt was very remarkable. The founders were assisted by twenty energetic American women and girls, who looked very trim in their neat horizon-blue 7 blue uniforms, and accomplished a tremendous amount of excellent work. They are all in love with the old French peasants and the darling

little children living amidst the ruins, and these in their turn are filled with the deepest admiration for the *braves demoiselles américaines* , who live in wooden barracks as they do, and yet look to them like Olympic goddesses.

Time passed and March was soon upon us and we traveled down to Bordeaux a few days before our sailing-date. The last week in Paris was terrible. Gothas rained bombs on us almost every night, and we scarcely closed our eyes. The train was overcrowded with people leaving on account of the air raids. Such raids, even though made every twenty-four hours, could have no military value whatsoever.

As everybody knows, Parisians kept admirably calm, but I must admit that from time to time the scaremongers contrived somewhat to upset our equilibrium. As, for instance, when we were informed that enemy submarines were to visit in Paris that evening by way of the main sewers. “Why not?” asked some. “Nothing would surprise us now from the Hun.” And so we waited, wondering with a smile whether our night would be spent in the cellar or in the attic.

Bordeaux had by that time become fairly Americanized; khaki uniforms were to be seen everywhere, 8 and the English language was more generally heard in the streets than French.

After an undisturbed night, my father woke us with these unexpected and terrible words: “Paris is being bombed by big guns!”

It seemed incredible. Had the Germans advanced with such speed that they were within reach of the capital?

“No,” answered the *préfect* , a friend of ours, whom we rushed off to see at the *préfecture* , “Paris is being shelled from the Aisne by the most powerful long-range gun Krupp has yet invented. I have just got the news directly from the Government, as I have the only civilian long-distance telephone allowed in Bordeaux during war-time.”

My parents, who had come to wish us farewell,—for this was our first crossing of the Atlantic,—left at once and returned to Paris. They wanted to be among those who set the example to the population to show that they would not desert their town when in real danger. So we waited patiently in Bordeaux for the *Chicago* to sail, getting worse and worse news from the front every day.

That afternoon, on getting out of the lift, we saw an American officer trying vainly to manipulate the little knobs.

“I can't make this confounded elevator rise an inch!”

I said to him quietly:

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“May I show you how to manage it?”

Whereupon he put down his hand-bag, gasped, and exclaimed: “My goodness, you speak English! Isn't that just wonderful! I guess you're the first woman speaking to me in my own tongue since I crossed three weeks ago. Do you mind if we just have a little talk together? It's fine to be able to speak to women!”

We dined with him and a friend of his, who also was an American officer. He showed us a little book he was learning by heart, the jolliest little book imaginable, called “Five Minutes' Conversation with the Ladies.” I opened it and read:

“Permettez-moi de vous serrer la main.

Per-mettay moa devoo serray lamainn.

Allow me to squeeze your hand.”

What a delightfully unexpected English translation! I wonder what compiler had the happy thought that shaking hands meant squeezing; and I suppose it is preferably taken literally! Forewarned, I slipped off my right-hand ring, the one that always hurts so, when we said good night.

There is also in the book a delightful farewell phrase (after five minutes' conversation):

“Our happiness has been far too short.”

After dinner we strolled off, I the four of us, to get a glimpse of Bordeaux by night. The streets were poorly lighted, and we found that walking about was no easy undertaking. As we stepped off 10 the pavement, I suddenly felt a hand quietly taking hold of my elbow. I wondered in what words I should reprimand the audacious officer. Then as we reached the opposite pavement, the hand dropped my arm like a hot potato. Every time we crossed a street, the same thing occurred, and I suddenly understood that this must be ordained by American politeness.

And so it is. In America, any man with whom you are walking takes your elbow in a discreet fashion when you cross a street, or walk in an unsteady way along a rough road. But if you want to do anything as enterprising as to go up a flight of stairs on foot in the land of “elevators,” the man in charge of you takes hold of your elbow as if you were the most precious and incapable paralytic in the world, and he almost carries you to the top.

In France we rarely trust our elbows to men, probably because they would never feel satisfied to stop there, but would soon want an additional part of the arm.

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CHAPTER II NO SUBMARINES

AFTER six days spent in Bordeaux we at last went aboard the *Chicago* , the twenty-fifth of March, and steamed out of the harbor in the night. The following day we reached

Le Verdon, and we cast anchor and waited patiently at the mouth of the Gironde for the destroyer that was to escort us for the first thirty hours. During that time, the captain tried the gun, and the marines exercised their skill on an a distant barrel, supposed to represent a submarine. *Brr!* It sent a little creepy wireless message down our spines, and it had the excellent effect of reminding us very forcibly that we were at war, as we were presently to enter the danger zone. Some of the saloon window-panes were shattered to pieces, owing to the tremendous vibration caused by each detonation.

At three o'clock we were marshaled up on deck, and the order was given for us to appear with our life-belts on, that we might be shown our places in the life-boats in case of danger. We all rushed to our cabins and reappeared immediately looking like a race of strange sea-monsters. Not one of the 12 life-belts fitted its wearer. Some of us “swam” in them, whereas others couldn't manage to make theirs meet around their bulky forms! I think nothing ever excited our hilarity more than seeing what a ridiculous-looking lot of people we had become in the span of a few seconds. The next quarter of an hour was spent in exchanging protective belts and trying to make some of the more rebellious ones fit with the help of a few safety-pins.

In our cabin we found a notice to the effect that in case an alarm were sounded by the siren, we should repair immediately to life-boat Number Two. On deck a placard with a big figure “2” was fastened to the railing, and there we should have to step into the boat and wait until it was lowered into the sea. All through the danger zone we all prayed silently that no periscopes might rise on our horizon. In fact we all shared a healthy optimism, as do the soldiers in the trenches: “Other boats may sink, but not ours; we are immune.” Why, and wherefore, were questions that we did not try to answer; our faith was born of an intuitive conviction that nothing could ever happen to a ship of the French Compagnie Transatlantique.

Sometime the following afternoon the anchor was raised and we steamed out into the big ocean with a destroyer at our side, prancing up and down, and tossed on the rough waves like a small toy.

There were very few women on board and these 13 were mostly dressmakers going to sell the latest Paris models in the big American cities. Nearly all the men were in uniform and belonged to various military missions. We also had fifty Spanish passengers of the laboring class, and we considered them our mascots. The Spanish Government had wired to Washington announcing their presence on the *Chicago* , and as the Germans always seem to know everything that is going on, we felt secure with these neutrals on board.

Among the passengers I met an ardent American suffragist. Needless to say, we became acquainted; for, being born with an inquiring turn of mind, I always enjoy the company of those who live for an ideal and out of the ordinary trend of existence. My clever suffragist had been sent on a six-month tour around the world and was then on her way back to the States after having investigated the woman's-rights question in Japan, Siberia, Russia, Sweden, England, and France. This woman had certainly given proof of indomitable will and moral courage. All alone she had faced the perils of Siberia in a period of greatest unrest, and the grave dangers of the revolution in Petrograd.

“Did the results of your investigations come up to what you expected?” was naturally my first eager question.

“Yes,” she answered, “Japan astonished me, and Russia also; the women in both these countries are 14 far more progressive than I had expected to find them. England's women I knew all about, as they have made themselves more prominent than have their sisters in any other part of the world. But the French women have disillusioned me.”

“And what has caused this disillusionment?” I asked, somewhat astonished.

“Oh! they are the least feminist of all.”

“Well, is it because they desire only to be feminine?”

“Yes, perhaps. The French woman does not want ‘rights’; she is satisfied with managing men. Tell me, don't you want the vote?”

I laughed.

“The vote! Why, the enemy is on our soil and there is no time for feminism. Men and women, too, have first to win the war.”

“And when the war is over?”

“Ah! French women have no intention of remaining behind their epoch; they will no doubt ask for the vote, and I imagine they will get it when they want it.”

“By a smile!” answered the suffragist, with a sigh, “as they obtain everything else. In France a smile is woman's strongest weapon, I have observed!”

Life on board was very simple. Nobody thought of dressing in the evening, and no one undressed at all during the first few nights. Our captain kindly 15 asked me to be seated on his right at table. However, he did not put in an appearance at all until the danger zone was passed. We met him for the first time on the fifth day.

“Two nights ago,” he told us, “we had an S O S call from a sinking vessel, but it must have gone down extremely rapidly, for it had not time to indicate its position.”

“And suppose the wireless had given more accurate information, would you have gone to the rescue of the wrecked victims?”

“Certainly not! We have strict orders to refrain from any interference, because sending out false S O S calls is one of the methods by which German submarines decoy passenger-boats; attracting to them in this way the ships that they want to torpedo.”

“Have you ever been in the immediate vicinity of a torpedoed boat, mort *mon commandant?* ” inquired a French colonel across the table.

“Yes, once last year. We were sailing at night with all lights out, when we suddenly heard the most ghastly shrieks and cries of distress arising from the dark waters at a little distance from us. It was one of the most nerve-racking experiences I have ever undergone.” The captain was visibly moved at the awful recollection.

“And what did you do?” we all exclaimed.

“What could we do? So many passengers' lives 16 are entrusted to my care. It is a grave responsibility, and I have to obey orders. We sailed carefully through the horrible zone, and for days and nights I could still hear the cries ringing like a death-knell in my ears.”

“Do you think all the people were drowned?” asked some one, in a breathless undertone.

“I don't suppose so, as the war-ships always go to the rescue as soon as the signal of distress is wired through space.”

The captain then changed the conversation.

The sun went down at about seven every evening, and the sailors screened the sides of the deck with a large canvas sheet that prevented the light of an open door or even of a cigar from being visible out at sea. In the cabins and the saloons all portholes were covered over for the same reason, and we spent the rest of the night in an atmosphere of sultriness and smoke. It was almost impossible to remain on deck on account of the total

darkness reigning there, and the difficulty of getting about and finding the entrance doors from the outside.

There was one man on board who had a strange and haggard look in his eyes. I was told that he was the captain of a foreign ship and was crossing to New York as a passenger. His story was rather a curious one. He had been shipwrecked three times since the beginning of the war. On the last voyage he was taken prisoner with two others by 17 an enemy submarine crew, and their life-boat was attached to the periscope. Two days later the Germans spied a British vessel in the distance and for some reason of their own they released their prisoners and abandoned them in the small launch, whilst they themselves disappeared hastily into the depths.

The captain and his companions waved their handkerchiefs to the English ship, but no one on board noticed their signals, and the big boat slowly disappeared beyond the horizon. Their hearts grew heavy as they faced the wide ocean where no one seemed likely to save them from starvation and thirst. Five days they floated in this way, without food or water, till at last the little lifeboat drifted to the shores of Madeira, with the three men lying half-dead within it.

After a week spent on board I thought we must surely have met all the charming people there, so what was my astonishment when an American, who was one of the passengers with whom we had conversed the most, asked to be allowed to introduce to us an Ex-Governor of Massachusetts. Massachusetts is a very difficult word for French people to pronounce. A Parisian lady after hearing this name tried to repeat it, but managed only to say, “ *Met ses chaussettes!* ” The sound of the French is nearly the same words but the phrase means, “Put on his socks!”

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We found the ex-governor, who is a bachelor, perfectly charming, and we enjoyed his company very much.

“Do you intend coming to Boston?” he asked US.

“We certainly intend going there. We should be extremely disappointed to miss the intellectual center of the United States.”

“Will you let me know your plans? For I should like you both to stay at my house.”

I probably looked puzzled and astonished, for he immediately added:

“You can accept, you know; in the States it's perfectly correct. Many young women come to stay with me; even when I am not at home, I put my house at their disposal, as I always leave my servants there.”

“Do you mean to say that you invite us even if you are out of town?” I inquired, astonished at this splendid hospitality.

“Why, certainly! I have a very good cook, and you will enjoy her bacon.”

We got very tired of the water after a fortnight, and when at last we saw the wonderful statue of Bartholdi's guarding the port of New York we hailed it with delight. Then we caught sight of the skyscrapers, in the distance looking like aërial cathedrals.

I will not attempt to describe them; they have 19 already been portrayed well and often, and I feel utterly incapable of writing in an adequate literary descriptive style. All I can say is that nothing is more impressive. New York makes me think of a city composed of innumerable towers of Babel, God this time having allowed men to build up to the skies without punishing them by the confusion of tongues. I suppose it is because America is made up of people of all nationalities, and that as a reward for their all having learned English God has let them attain almost to the heights of His own kingdom.

CHAPTER III NEW YORK “EN GUERRE”

THE landing formalities are long,and tiresome. We had filled in any number of legal papers, affirming among other things that we were not bigamists and had no intention of becoming so. Fortunately the chief detective, an amiable and clever-looking official, came to our rescue as soon as he discovered us on the *Chicago* , and we immediately obtained from the port authorities, who held council in the saloon like Pluto and his associates, the permission to land.

“Where is Miss Morgan?” we asked anxiously.

“She has just sailed for France.”

This answer was given by Miss X—, a friend of Miss Morgan's, who had come to greet us at the dock.

“But when did she leave?”

“A few days ago, on account of the offensive. She wanted to be over there with her unit. All her friends here will take good care of you.”

But already, as we were speaking, we saw several reporters coming toward us.

“What do you think of New York *en guerre?* ”

“! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?.”

This was our first acquaintance with American reporters, as we had never before crossed the Atlantic. They seemed very polite and asked only a few questions while an employee unlocked our trunks. Mr. Sharp, the American Ambassador in Paris, had very kindly given us a letter for the Custom-house. Every one was most courteous and after a simple

formality, which consisted in opening our trunks and shutting them up again without even inspecting what was inside, we were free to leave the dock.

“When is my first talk, Miss X—?” I asked, imagining that as Americans have the reputation of acting with lightning rapidity I might be taken immediately upon a platform.

“In a few days' time, but I must first tell you that the new name of our organization is ‘The American Committee for Devastated France.’”

This conversation led us to the exit door, where Miss Morgan's motor-car was waiting for us. Its owner had most kindly put it at our disposal for our stay in New York; and she also asked us to look upon her studio as our own.

We drove to the Vanderbilt Hotel, where we had a suite of rooms on the fourteenth floor, and I assure you we felt that we had finally entered upon the way to heaven! At last we were to know 22 what New York life really was like. We had heard so much about it that actually to live it filled us with excitement.

I rang the bell; the waiter came in and took my orders. He spoke with a very pronounced foreign accent. Pushed by curiosity, I asked, “Are you American?”

“No, ma'am; I'm a Pole.”

Then the telephone rang again; it had already rung several times since our arrival.

“Hello! Hello! Is this the Countess de Bryas, who arrived on the *Chicago?* ”

“Yes.”

“I'm a reporter from the Y—paper, and should like an interview.”

“Very well, I will see you to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock, at the studio.”

The porter brought up our luggage. He, too, had a decidedly foreign accent.

“Are you American?”

“No, ma'am; I'm a Swede.”

Then the maid came to ask us if she could help us.

“Are you an American?” I asked, hoping at last to see a real American.

“No, ma'am; I'm Irish.”

“But where are the Americans?” exclaimed to my sister.

“I'm beginning to wonder whether we shall ever see any,” was her reply.

Then a friend came in to see us and was still there when the waiter entered to remove our tea-tray. I signed the check and let the man go, having rewarded him with nothing more than thanks.

“But you have forgotten the tip,” said my friend.

“We tip each time they bring us up anything—a meal, a parcel, flowers, or telegrams.”

“It is fortunate that you told us!” I exclaimed.

“In Europe we tip only at the end of our stay at the hotel, as each floor has its special servants.”

It took us some time to get over the effects of our voyage, and for hours the walls of the room seemed to waltz around us. I felt as if I were tipsy, a strange feeling for me, truly! Both people and things performed a wild jig in front of me. The dance was so fast and

so furious that the only remedy was to go to bed. But even that was what the Americans would call “quite a job.” For a bed in motion is no end of trouble to get into, but I finally managed to get ahead of it and jumped in with a sigh of relief. My eyes closed, and the dance was over.

With what a thrill, after a good night's rest, did we wake up to the knowledge that we were really in New York! For many seemed the years we had been waiting to see that wonderful city, with its 24 sky-scrapers and its intensely active life. And when at last one finds oneself in it, the feeling is a marvelous one indeed. But the ringing of the telephone soon put an end to my happy dreams and brought me back to earth.

I had never before in my life heard the telephone ring so often as I did then, for in France the telephone is less in use than in the States.

“Shall I ever manage to get dressed!” exclaimed my sister.

“I hope so,” I replied,” for we have an appointment with the reporters at eleven o'clock.”

However, we arrived punctually at the studio, and there we met a number of reporters, who all immediately asked the same questions—whether we had seen a submarine, and if we were in Paris when the long-distance gun was bombarding the city! Our chagrin may be better imagined than described at having to answer that we left Paris just five minutes before the first shell fell into the city, en route for Bordeaux, to sail on that unlucky boat that missed all the submarines, every one of them!

I was then photographed many times—sitting, standing, looking out of the window, first with my hat on, and then without it—and, as I afterward found, I kept on smiling through it all despite the fact that I had never in my life been photographed so often in so short a space of time. We then left 25 the studio and were taken to a photographer on Fifth Avenue, where we both had to pose in order to have other photographs ready for the press, hoping in this way to avoid being snapshotted in every town by each local paper.

While I was talking to the photographer, two more reporters came in and asked for an interview.

I was much struck by the great sympathy all those I had spoken with felt for France. They all admired what she has done, the way the men had fought and the women had helped in the struggle. The love that unites America and France is one beautiful feature of this war. America's love is the healing balm that will help France to recover from all her wounds. The word “Américain” is blessed by all the French. It is uttered with love, with reverence, with admiration, and with gratitude. There is an affinity between the two nations from which has sprung this great sentiment that no human power can destroy, for it comes from the heart and is a great spiritual love.

Not only do the Americans nurse our wounded soldiers, but they take care of our civilian population in the devastated regions and all over the country. The Rockefeller Foundation is struggling against the terrible scourge of tuberculosis, which has spread like a plague in my country since the war. The “Fatherless Children of France,” by the adoption of hundreds of thousands of little orphans, 26 is certainly contributing to link the two countries together by creating a sincere affection between the young generation of France and all the generations in America, for our children are adopted by people of all ages and all classes in the United States.

I was told the other day a most touching story, which went straight to my heart and filled my eyes with tears. In one of the American camps in the States a French orphan, a little girl, has been adopted by one of the cooks of a regiment. He has taken in his charge a little child living in France, and through his affectionate care has become her protector, in fact, her second father. Not content with having her brought up at his own expense, he devotes his economies to sending her toys, which make of her a bright and happy child. He is giving her not only the instruction that will help her later in life but, what is perhaps more important, he is, through sacrifice, making of her a normal child, brought up in a happy home amidst all that makes children smile and live in dreamland.

As we drove away to go back to the hotel, we craned our necks to try to get a glimpse of all that was to be seen from the windows of the motorcar. Fifth Avenue! And this time we did indeed realize what New York in war time means. The Third Liberty Loan Drive had just begun, and huge bright red-bordered flags were hanging lengthwise 27 across the avenue bearing the words, “Fight the Huns,” “If you have not bought a bond, you are a slacker,” “What are you going to do to help the boys,” etc., printed in enormous letters. On the walls of the houses big posters were seen, bearing expressive and encouraging mottoes to help win the war, such as “Give till it hurts.” Then other posters were placarded everywhere, representing in descriptive painting “Pershing's Crusaders.”

The war was everywhere—on the walls, in the windows, where little flags appeared with the stars indicating the number of men in a household or a firm who are soldiers. Most cars had the American, French, and English flags floating from the motor and another flag hanging in the window behind. Decorated stands were erected in different sections of the avenue and I could see women addressing crowds of passers-by, and from their energetic gestures and the attentive look of their audiences I fancied they must be “hitting straight from the shoulder.” This was my first contact with the speaking craze of which I was destined to become a victim!

Fifth Avenue looked so bright under its gay-colored flags that the town seemed decked out as if for some great victory. All this was perfectly novel to us, and we simply stared with excitement. No women in France ever make speeches out-of-doors; few men, in fact, do so, unless they are congressmen, 28 and then only at such ceremonies as the unveiling of a commemorative monument.

The American women one sees in the street are all apparently lovely, and so well dressed in every way. Their heads are small and well proportioned. Their profiles are a wonder to me for their beauty, perfectly Grecian and statuesque in their pure outline. The forehead and the chin follow a straight line with the nose and nowhere is there seen the fish profile which is so common in Europe. (I mean a retreating forehead and a chin swallowed up

in the neck, which makes the nose stand out of the face conspicuously.) In fact, after a little while in America, I began to miss the strong, commanding, predominant nose, which is considered rather an aristocratic feature on the old continent. Women's noses in the United States are generally a poem of delicacy, small, refined, and regular.

Almost all the women wear their shoes and slippers long and pointed, which gives an appearance of refinement to the foot. This fashion does not come from Paris, where the shoes are very short, with higher heels and round at the toe, but I believe in general I prefer the look of American feet. I was very much struck by the daintiness of the young girls and young women. They almost invariably have peach-like complexions, in spite of indulging in out-of-door sports and exposure to the 29 sun. They have silky hair, which they wear brushed off the forehead and brought back in a wavy curl over the ears.

To my surprise, I saw no old ladies about—not what we call in France the typical *vieille dame* , the kind that wears a little bonnet and goes to church every morning at dawn. Perhaps women age becomingly in America; maybe they remain at home; or very likely they are all dead! I should not be astonished to learn that people die off quicker in New York than elsewhere in the “rush-your-breath-out” existence. The older women are handsome, with exquisite silvery white hair, as though powdered in Washington's time or at Marie Antoinette's court; their faces are young and purposeful.

I have a wild theory of my own that God created the black, the yellow, and the red human races, and that He then made yet another race of people, a mixture of the preceding ones, a sort of “rainbow division,” called the Aryans. Now the Aryans declared that when they looked black they were only dark-skinned from the sun; when they were yellow-looking, it was due to jaundice; and when they were red they were apoplectic, and that in all cases they were the white race. God has been giving them a famous lesson during the two past centuries. For He is making a mixture of Aryans on American soil, and has decreed that *they* are to be the real 30 great white race, and so He makes their hair turn white while they are still very young and gives them their pink-and-white complexions.

In returning to the Vanderbilt, always anxious about the war news, I got the evening papers and what was not our surprise and amusement to see my photograph and an account of one of the interviews under this heading:

COUNTESS HERE TO AID DESTITUTE.

SORRY SHE MISSED RAID ON PARIS.

Mon Dieu; life is of a sadness! Think of having to spend all one's life explaining how it happened that one left Paris just one hour before the great German gun began the long-distance bombardment! Think of having to smile all one's life and describe an ocean voyage of the year 1918 without even a peek of a submarine!

That is the plight of the fair Countess Madeleine de Bryas, blonde and blue-eyed, who arrived here recently after having systematically missed all the big shows of 1918.

Two telegrams were brought up to my sitting-room—one from Monsieur Jusserand, our French Ambassador, and the other from Monsieur André Tardieu, our French High Commissioner, inviting us to luncheon and dinner in Washington two days later.

I looked at the clock and, seeing it was the dinner hour, we decided for the first time since our arrival to take the meal in the dining-room. As we entered, the orchestra was playing ragtime and a 31 feeling of sadness immediately crept over me. It felt like a weight on my heart, as I looked round and saw the happy faces of people seemingly able to enjoy that dance music. For almost four long years France had been invaded, the enemy on our soil, and all gay music had been silenced. On the day of the declaration of war the orchestras ceased playing in all restaurants and hotels, partly because the men had all left to go to defend their country and also as a sign of respect toward those who were laying down their lives on the battle-field for the women and children of France.

But such, fortunately, was not the case in America and I thought it very wise to keep things going as usual and not depress the nation. It would have been wrong, truly, to make life gloomy for those who were going “over there,” before crossing the ocean. The “boys” all arrived in France with a splendid morale, and I am convinced that the fact was partly due to the influence of the last bright and happy days they spent in their country before coming to “fight the Huns,” and help to deliver the world from the tyranny of militarism.

We were awakened by the telephone:

“Hello! Hello!” “You want an interview?” “Very well then; my sister will see you this afternoon at the studio!”

And yet it had seemed to me that I had spoken the previous day to all the reporters in the town, 32 and my sister was of my opinion, whereupon we concluded that they grew like mushrooms, springing up in a single night. I supposed it was better to see them all, specially as I could frankly say that I quite enjoyed speaking to them; they were such attentive listeners, it was a real pleasure to give them interviews.

We had spent the evening before in trying to get into our heads and on the tips of our tongues the new title of Miss Morgan's committee “The American Committee for Devastated France.” For English people it is very easy to remember, but for the French it is a real undertaking to have to change the name without mixing it up with the former one, “Civilian Division of the American Fund for French Wounded.”

Miss Morgan's motor-car came to take us to the committee headquarters.

“Give the address, dear,” I said to my sister, as I entered the carriage.

“Please take us to the devastated committee!”

Then, shaking with laughter, having realized that she had not yet caught the name correctly, we started for this new devastation.

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CHAPTER IV “DRY” WASHINGTON

I SECURED our tickets and lower berths for Washington, and I was in reality filled with curiosity to know what my impressions of the Pullman car would be.

Just a few minutes before eleven o'clock that evening we went to the station, to find it one of the most beautiful, certainly, we had ever seen, splendid in its huge proportions and palace-like in effect. What wonderful fêtes could be held there! I began to imagine all the artistic entertainments possible of being given in a building of such vast dimensions. Then we found ourselves on the platform and entered our car.

My first impression! Shall I really say what it was? I had the feeling of entering a catacomb. For there before me, in semi-obscurity, were feet, legs, arms, and occasionally heads protruding from behind long green curtains. And I thought of Italy, where one of the attractions offered tourists is a view of the limbs of early martyrs, all systematically hung upon the walls of dark passages or artistically exposed to the view of the curious 34 public. But here you had the show included in the price of your railway ticket, and the only extra was your tip to the colored porter upon arrival at your destination.

When I was shown the lower berth where I was to spend the night, my second impression was—of a tomb! Surely, I thought, one was even buried alive in this extraordinary place! And I recollected an adventure experienced by one of my friends on a visit to the Roman catacombs. Accompanied by his favorite dog, he was shown through this interesting place by an old monk. After a long walk amongst the skeletons, he was amazed to see his dog rushing toward him, wagging his tail and bearing triumphantly in his mouth the shin-bone of some time-honored saint, believing himself in luck at having found a bone!

It is easy to picture the horrified attitude of the monk, who quickly rushed back through the long passages with the recaptured shin-bone, endeavoring to identify the particular “relic” to whom this limb belonged.

So, thought I, beware when traveling in a Pull-man car; for what more likely than that you might some day lose your little toe snapped off by a passenger's pet!

Early in the morning we arrived in Washington. Another magnificent station! I was told that the passenger concourse here is the largest room under 35 one roof in the world and that an army of fifty thousand men could stand on the floor. How thoroughly we now realized what we had so often heard that everything in America is built on a huge scale, as if the country were inhabited by a population of giants!

We went directly to the Shoreham Hotel. It was crowded with people of different nationalities who had all flocked to the capital; for in war-time Washington was the great center of interest in the States.

“Shall we soon have our luggage?”

“I cannot tell, Countess,” answered the manager. “Some people who arrived a week ago are still waiting for theirs.”

“But we are lunching at the French Embassy and we cannot go there in our traveling-clothes.” “I am sorry, but on account of the war the station is congested, and it is impossible for you to have your baggage to-day.”

I turned toward my sister: “Eh bien, nous voici dans de beaux draps!” of which the literal translation would be “Well, here we are in beautiful sheets,” but the English express it by, “We are in a pretty mess!”

Madame Jusserand received us with her well-known amiability, and when we excused ourselves for coming in traveling-clothes to see her, she put us at our ease at once by saying:

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“It is war, and I know well that French-women have dressed most simply during these last four years.”

Our ambassadress was herself attired in a charmingly sober dress, which indicated well the feeling of seriousness of a whole nation sullied during forty-five months by the presence of a brutal and inhuman enemy. Monsieur and Madame Jusserand have won the hearts of all the Americans who know them. Madame Jusserand inquired about “Le Bon Gite,” and I was happy to be able personally to thank her for the interest she had shown in it, in sending me frequent checks to help the poor stricken population of our devastated regions. The French Government erects the little wooden huts which the “Bon Gite” provides with furniture.

On leaving the embassy, we drove through the town and thoroughly enjoyed seeing the lovely houses. Washington is truly a very beautiful city, with its spacious and shady avenues lined with picturesque mansions. The monuments remind me of the architecture of Greece, which wondrous land I visited some years ago. The houses here are often built of reddish or brown sandstone, but I prefer by far those painted white, with high windows and balconies. How we missed balconies in America! To a French eye houses look undressed without them, as a woman would without a single jewel. 37 What would our Parisian boulevards and our avenues look like if there were not galleries or balconies running along their fa#ades like a delicate iron lace-work, giving them the finishing touch of elegance!

Here we saw everywhere, as in New York, the famous fire-escape ladders; for we were told that in America houses burn down almost viciously, so to express it, as if an army of

little invisible fire salamanders were blowing hard, with cheeks puffed out at sight of the slightest flame, in order to cause a conflagration. I don't know whether or not anybody ever uses the ladders in case of alarm, but I imagine burglars find in them a remarkably convenient means of breaking into houses. Americans assure me they are never afraid of thieves, and yet I am told that maiden ladies in Nantucket have a man come and guard their houses at night. One man advertised as follows:

“Our job during the day is twenty-five cents an hour; sleeping with nervous old ladies, fifty cents.”

A thing that struck us immediately was the number of colored people in the streets. In France we see colored women only in circuses and we go to look at them as a special attraction. One never sees them walking about the streets, and it would be an event to meet a number of them either in a tram-car or in the subway of Paris. In Washington there are more colored people than white walking 38 about. The women, notwithstanding their somber complexions, are very showy, owing to the vivid colors they seem to enjoy wearing —in order, perhaps, to try to look brighter than the white people.

The little negro children were our delight; they looked so happy and contented with life. They walk as if they were perpetually dancing—that is, when not on their roller-skates, on which they seem to spend the greater part of their lives. When the family is a large one, the skates are shared among its members, and it is not unusual to see a child on one skate, hopping along on the other foot, with which he pushes vigorously.

Policemen in Washington look very impressive indeed, and have acquired the most wonderful knack of making independent and simultaneous movements with different parts of the body—somewhat, I thought, in the style of the Dalcroze system and other rhythmic dances, in which you have to beat one time with the right hand, and another with the left one, while your head and your legs are called upon to beat yet another in concert. No time is ever wasted in America; with the one hand the policeman beckons forward one

lot of cars; with the other he signals a stop to those coming from another direction, all the while talking and indicating the way to a “footman.” (I was most interested to learn that a footman in certain parts of 39 America meant not only a man-servant, but also a pedestrian. I well remember the notice on a bridge somewhere in the Middle West: “No footmen allowed in this thoroughfare.”)

Policemen, it seemed to me, are the most conspicuous figures in the city. I was particularly amused at some of them perched up in a sort of pulpit, from which they direct not consciences, but street strategy. They have at their disposal an instrument composed of metal flags at the top of a pole. These, which they show alternately, bear the words “Go” and “Stop.” In this way, the regulation of traffic is very easily accomplished. (Occasionally policemen also serve as advertisers. As, for instance, during a Red Cross drive all of them in a certain town held in their right hands a Japanese fan with a huge red cross printed on it.) Everybody in America is thoroughly disciplined. When the traffic manager makes a signal meaning “Stop,” all the cars cease running, with law-abiding respect. There are none of those loud recriminations which we hear from our Parisian ex- *cochers* de fiacre, who abandoned their old vehicles to become taxi-drivers, without leaving behind them their old vociferous grumbling.

Next morning we determined to go to the Union Station and fetch our trunks as in the evening we were to dine with Monsieur Tardieu, head of the French High Commission. On getting there we 40 found a delightful, roguish-looking darky, who helped us most obligingly in our search, taking us down somewhere into the mysterious underground depths of the station in a baggage elevator. When I told our colored friend that we were French, he looked at me complacently for a few seconds and then paid me the biggest compliment he could think of.

“Gee! Well, I guess your father is good enough to be mine!”

After hunting for some time amid gigantic stacks of trunks, we spied our own two boxes and had them sent immediately to the hotel.

“How are you to-day, Captain?”

“Fine!” answered a woman's voice. We instinctively turned around, wishing to solve this mystery, and were confronted by a young woman in khaki uniform. Our eyes opened wide in astonishment as we contemplated this unfeminine woman.

“How on earth did she manage to get that rank!” I whispered to my sister.

“I suppose she has killed at least a dozen Huns,” she replied in a still lower voice.

For Frenchwomen do not wear uniforms; in fact, we had no time to think about them! The war broke out so suddenly that it fell upon us like a thunder-bolt; we all set to work in the clothes we had on, and ever since we have been wearing out our old stock. The only Frenchwoman I have 41 heard of as having a rank—that of corporal—in our army won it on the battle-field, but she does not wear a uniform. That distinction we leave to the warriors.

It was only on the day we decided to go to the States that my sister and I ordered a few new dresses. We wished to keep up the Parisian reputation of elegance; and, also, we consider that when one goes to a foreign country, the first quality required is adaptability. As we heard that the American women were wearing *grand décolleté* in the evening, which we have not done in Paris since the war broke out, we decided to dress likewise, although in dark colors.

The house in which Monsieur Tardieu lived, as did also two other important members of the French High Commission, is situated on S Street. It was called the “House of the Bachelors,” notwithstanding the fact that two of the inhabitants are married, though their

wives were in France doing war work. The name is probably due to the circumstance that these men lived together without the presence of any ladies.

All the American women we met there that evening were pretty and nice looking. They wore lovely and most becoming dresses of handsome materials, such as we have not seen in Paris since before the war, and the bright and gay colors of their clothes gave great pleasure to our eyes.

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As soon as the last guest arrived the butler came in with glasses on a tray, which he presented to each one of us.

“What is this, Monsieur Tardieu?”

“Why, Madame, don't you know this American custom which assures the success of any dinner-party?”

I tasted it and understood that I had just made the acquaintance of the cocktail.

“Do you mean to say that this is considered a good drink? Frankly, I cannot understand its world-wide reputation.” Then looking at my sister, I saw that her face betrayed no enthusiasm, either.

“Wait, Madame, and you will tell me later what you really think about it,” said Monsieur Tardieu, with a knowing look.

We then passed to the dining-room, and an intense feeling of happiness, mingled with indifference to what I said or did, gradually grew upon me, and all the other guests were evidently equally well disposed toward the world. The conversation was animated, in fact, very brilliant, and when Monsieur Tardieu, next to whom I was seated, asked: “Now what

do you think about the cocktail?” I felt more inclined to get up and dance than to give him a serious answer.

“The taste is certainly not nice, although I shall 43 soon become accustomed to it, I am sure, but the effect is unmistakable! Life has never seemed to me more engaging and enjoyable.”

My neighbor on the other side then asked:

“Do you know that Washington is a dry city and that for many months now we have n't been able to get any wine or liquor? We are living on old stock, and when that gives out, we'll have no more cocktails to offer to our guests.”

“Is there any way of getting over that?” asked my sister, with mischievous intent.

“One can always break any law, you know, and if you want a suggestion, I can give you a fairly good one.”

“Then we are listening with both our ears!” exclaimed my sister and I together.

“You have perhaps already been told that alcohol is particularly recommended for snake bite. You can therefore easily imagine how popular snakes have become in the dry states, where liquor is forbidden except on a medical prescription. Many people are now in search of the snake, which has become a most fashionable pet. I was told the other day that here in Washington an indignant tee-totaler went to the director of the zoo and asked him if he had a serpent for hire.

“‘I can't oblige you, sir, I'm sorry to say, as the serpent we let out on hire is still engaged for ten days!’”

44

By that time the dinner was over, and Monsieur Tardieu said to me:

“I fear that you have come to America at an unfavorable moment, for the Liberty Loan drive has been on now for a week. It will last a fortnight longer and the American Government would certainly look on you with an unfavorable eye were you to ask for funds during this campaign.”

“Then what do you advise me to do?” I asked.

After a moment's reflection Monsieur Tardieu said, “To speak for the Liberty Loan.”

We agreed, and the following morning the Marquis de X—, a friend from France who was then on the High Commission, took us to the Treasury Department, where we met Mr. Horner, the Director of the Speakers' Bureau.

And so it was arranged that for the next fortnight I was to work for his organization, speaking in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and the vicinities of these cities, for the Third Liberty Loan drive.

We lunched with our friend the Marquis de X—and his lovely American wife at their house, and there we met Mr. George Creel, chairman of the Government's Committtee on Public Information, and he suggested that, whenever we might wish for it, he had work for us to do.

The first lecture arranged for me by the American Committee for Devastated France was at Forest Glen Seminary, in Maryland. The wife of 45 the director came to fetch us in a comfortable motor-car (the motor-cars are “frightfully” comfortable in America!) and we drove through Rock Creek Park. Never before had we seen a more picturesque sight. Washingtonians have let this park grow wild, without grooming it as Americans are tempted to do with everything under the sky—nature or themselves, specially. The creek to which the park owes its name is a noisy rivulet which we crossed several times

at different points. The car simply dashed into the water, making a “splashy-bubbly” noise most refreshing to the ear in hot weather.

Forest Glen Seminary is a school for wealthy girls, who come from even the most remote states in the Union to complete their education and study art, languages, and all kinds of sports, besides all the boresome things that make one seem clever, like arithmetic, natural history, etc.

We have nothing at all like this for French girls. In my country girls remain at home, and have a governess to accompany them everywhere, as they may never go out alone until they get married. The war, it is true, has somewhat lessened the severity of this rule, and I don't know what further modifications it may introduce into our customs later. Our young girls attend classes, in which they study strenuously, until they are sixteen. At that age they often pass an examination and for two years 46 longer they continue their education, Which comprises fewer sports than in America but, I believe, more literature and art.

When they are eighteen they give up most of their studies and make their début in society life. This consists of going to the opera and attending balls at which their mothers chaperon them, sitting in the adjoining drawing-rooms and endeavoring all the while to secure chairs in the doorway, from which they can keep affectionate eyes on their daughters.

Parents in France have but one idea and that is to marry off their daughters as soon as possible; and so they look out for some eligible partner as soon as the girls are eighteen. Some men are considered, as elsewhere the world over, to be real “catches,” with this difference, that in France they are run after by the mothers and not by the daughters, as is the case in Anglo-Saxon countries. When the mothers have successfully established their own offspring in life, they endeavor to marry off the daughters of their friends, often turning into most enthusiastic match-makers. I knew a lady who, when she was interested in a young girl, would open in a haphazard way a social register and look up the name of

a possible husband. Then, should it prove a lucky inspiration, she would bring the young people together; and it happened that some 47 very happy matches were brought about in this way!

Is n't marriage a lottery, after all? I suppose all this must seem to American minds positively antediluvian!

Naturally, I am speaking of what happened before 1914, as there has been no social life whatever since, all the women having engaged in war work, principally as nurses in hospitals. This has probably tended to increase the number of romances, and there have been many cases where young girls have married one of the wounded men they were nursing, or where a soldier has become engaged to his war godmother, called by us a *marraine de guerre.*

Forest Glen is well situated in the woods and is composed of a number of villa buildings. After dinner we walked along a concrete path leading to a Grecian-looking temple, the school theater. In this there are several boxes, an upper gallery, and a fairly large stage—just a dream of a theater, well decorated and yet perfectly simple. The girls were all attired in light-colored evening dresses and I had spread out before my gaze a real parterre of bright and fresh-looking flowers.

American girls have an extraordinarily youthful appearance, added to a matured decision in their attitude, as if they always knew without any 48 hesitation what they were going to do or say next. Some of the girls in my audience were knitting away at socks for the Red Cross, with the zeal that people in America are apt to show in everything they undertake. I can still see the energy with which they made their needles dance up and down. They listened, also, with the same intentness. Never before in any country had I met with a better audience. At times tears rolled down those velvety cheeks, and again I heard merry peals of laughter, according to the subject. There was in the room an atmosphere of youthful vitality and enthusiasm that would have made a speaker of a mute.

When my speech was over several of the girls belonging to one of the school's many clubs, called by a Greek name, enthusiastically proposed to become sponsors of one of the French devastated villages, for which they would collect contributions from their members. This idea I thought charming, and I was touched to see how America's young generation generously responds to noble impulses of the heart.

“All the girls here do their bit for the war,” explained one of the directresses—a tall, slim, handsome young woman with a mass of lovely reddish-gold hair—“and lately they have had a new idea for raising funds. As you probably have already noticed, every time you have your shoes cleaned in America, you pay fifteen cents to the boot-cleaner. 49 Well, here the girls have decided that they will save this small sum daily and, instead of having the servants do that work, they patriotically polish one another's shoes in order to give the fifteen cents to the Red Cross.”

When I calculated (you cannot help counting everything in America!) what sum this would make at the end of the nine months of the school year, I was amazed to find that the contribution for the Red Cross would amount to a minimum of twelve thousand, four hundred and forty-five dollars.

“You probably will also be interested to hear,” added the directress, “that the school has started a drilling-class for the girls. We have an officer who comes several times a week to teach them to shoot and to dig trenches, and put them through the soldier's ordinary military training. This officer also gives them a general idea of modern warfare. At night two girls volunteer to remain on guard in the trenches. As there are no tramps in this part of Maryland, this practice is an excellent one for learning self-control without incurring any risk.”

There is no doubt that in this country girls seem to combine a perfect feminine appearance with the masculine temperament.

We were lucky enough to be able to secure a stateroom on the train for New York, though we had been told that since America had entered the 50 war many of the trains de luxe had been suppressed, despite the increasing number of travelers on this line.

Another surprise awaiting us was the discovery of ice-water in the dressing-room. I think Americans must certainly have a miniature Vesuvius within, which they are constantly obliged to extinguish with ice-water. In the hotels, when we ordered coffee for our breakfast, a glass of icewater invariably appeared first on the table. Even in the middle of the afternoon we were sometimes offered as a great delicacy a glass of cold water.

In France water is the last beverage we should think of offering our guests; we should offer them tea. Perhaps, unlike Americans, we have small icebergs hidden away in our interiors.

51

CHAPTER V AMERICAN HOSPITALITY

THE Vanderbilt again! We arrived early in the morning and found a pile of letters awaiting our return. These were all invitations from various persons in New York, to whom we had letters of introduction sent on before leaving for Washington.

Hospitality in America is overwhelming. One might easily imagine that the Americans have nothing to do but entertain foreigners; and yet we know they are busy people. In fact, I had never met any human beings giving the impression of having so much to do in a single day. They receive one with such great amiability that one perforce forgets their general reputation of considering time as money. They lavished their time on us until we found them adorable.

That morning we lunched at the Colony Club with Miss X—, one of the members of the American Committee for Devastated France, who had invited a number of her friends to meet us. We had never before set foot in a woman's club. So 52 this one was decidedly a novelty to us. There is but one club of this kind in Paris; it counts but a small number of

members and personally we do not belong to it. Women's clubs have no success in our Latin countries, as it is thought that they keep women too much from their homes.

I was interested in getting acquainted with the Americans' attitude and wished to grasp their idea of life, which seems to me conceived on another scale, probably more modern than our own, based as ours is on much tradition.

This club is certainly ideal for those who feel the necessity of belonging to it. We met at the luncheon many New Yorkers and were confirmed in our opinion that the women of the new continent have nothing to envy their European sisters. They are witty in their conversation, appear to brilliant advantage, and give themselves the same trouble to please one another as we take to please men. It seemed really very odd to see all these “hen parties”; they do not exist in France, for the men, even those who are the most deeply engrossed in their business, always come home to lunch with their wives.

The food and the drink are excellent (we swallowed a “Bronx!”), but naturally some things appeared rather quaint to us. First of all, we had placed in front of our plates a small dish of salted almonds and nuts, which were delicious, and 53 which we were supposed to nibble at all through the meal; then on the left-hand there was a plate with a little knife, for the butter and the bread. Nobody ate any but war-bread, and in no house to which we were invited did the mistress fail to exclaim as we sat down at the table, “I am strictly Hooverish.” We were to understand by this that the bread contained the exact amount of wheat allowed by Mr. Hoover, the great food administrator. We were offered substitutes of all kinds, which we had never tasted before, including rice-bread and corn-bread, which is very good, but crumbles to pieces almost from being looked at.

There was yet another thing that astonished us: we had to eat so many different courses on the same plate—meat with sauce, then spinach, beans, corn, potatoes. These you make up into separate little heaps, and you are finally puzzled to know which to try first! The salad, also, is quite different from ours at home. It is eaten with a small piece of

cheese, a special kind of jam, and a little salt biscuit. This sounds very odd to French people, but I thought it perfect, and I only wish they would adopt this custom in France, as well as the cocktails.

For people preferring a lively life ours in America would have been perfect. Day was invariably ushered in for us by the ringing of the telephone. It woke us up, and from then on my sister, while 54 in our rooms, scarcely ever left its vicinity, and I would hear:

“Reporter of what paper?—Impossible to see you now. Can you come later?”

Frew, frew, frit! At this unusual sound I turned around and saw our letters pushed in from under the door. While I was reading them the telephone rang again.

“Yes, we have already been photographed,” etc. “Good-by. Thank you.”

I gave the letters to my sister, who attended to all the secretarial work. She sat down to answer them, but hardly had she taken up her pen to write, “Dear Mrs.—: We are so sorry,” when again the 'phone rang.

“Oh, it's you, Miss X—. Very well; then you are coming to fetch us at eleven o'clock?”

Another attempt at the letter—“not to be able to accept your kind—” *Dring, dring, dring!* The telephone again!

Frew, frew, frit! More letters were thrust under the door. Many of these were invitations for luncheon next day. I read and passed them to my sister, so that I might go into the bedroom to try to finish dressing, and—there were more letters half-way under the door—more invitations for luncheon next day! I read them and passed them to my sister.

“But what will become of us to-morrow, my 55 dear,” she exclaimed, “if we are to eat all these meals?”

We were overwhelmed by the vast proportions of American hospitality. “Telephone, telephone, when will you stop?” was my constant wail.

“Hello!—All right. Thank you.” The car was already waiting, and we had n't even breakfasted! And this was considered a typical New York morning!

We dined out that evening, and were invited afterwards to the Metropolitan Opera House. As the motor-car took us through the streets we were fairly dazzled by all the lights, the more so because we were no longer accustomed to such brilliant illuminations. For months—nay, years—as soon as the sun disappeared behind the horizon, Paris had been plunged into darkness. Not a single streak of light was to be seen through the windows; few street-lamps were lit, one or two in each street, and as soon as an air raid was announced these were extinguished. Here, in New York, every effort was made to remind one of the Third Liberty Loan. Huge luminous posters, scintillating with inscriptions, urged the passer-by to subscribe. The city was lit up as for a royal reception; it seemed to be offering a gorgeous fête to its inhabitants.

I was told that in the daytime some of the most famous singers in the city—Geraldine Farrar, Caruso, Muratore, and others—sang in the open 56 air to attract the crowds. Then speakers would address the mass of people and the subscriptions would be taken by elegant women who devoted their time and their energy to this patriotic work.

The Spanish singer Barrientos, who has a worldwide reputation and whom we had often the pleasure of applauding in Paris, sang that night at the Metropolitan in Rossini's “Barbiere de Siviglia.” The sight of this opera-house, all illuminated as it was, and filled with handsome women in low-necked gowns and men in full dress, made me feel at least three years younger. In our Parisian theaters the house was almost in complete darkness, the stage alone being well lighted.

Even in our private houses we lived in comparative darkness, owing to the fact that fuel must be saved for the war factories. Light was rationed and we had to take great care not to burn more than the amount of gas and electricity allowed in the household, for fear of having to do entirely without for a whole week, the penalty inflicted on those who squandered.

We were lunching out, dining out, spending the entire day rushing about wildly in feverish excitement. It would have been perfectly impossible to rest quietly in our sitting-room. New York streets have an irresistible attraction possessed by no streets anywhere in Europe. In America the worst mishap that can befall one is to miss something. 57 Americans all seem to have the faculty of being everywhere at once.

I talked at the Colony Club one Sunday afternoon at half-past three o'clock, with the lights turned on. A fashionable gathering of men and women crowded the big reception hall, and people were even standing in the doorways. In America the speaker always goes up on the platform empty-handed and stands in full view of the audience. No one would ever attempt to give an address sitting, as is usual in Europe, reading notes from behind a table on which stand a decanter of water and a glass. The public is so indulgent in America, that extemporaneous speaking is easy. People never expect speakers to quote what some one else thought in the fifteenth century, but they are anxious to know all about the personal experiences of those they are listening to. This induces the lecturer to use the magical “I did,” “I saw,” “I will tell you,” which have a magnetic influence over crowds in this country, where audiences have the rare quality of sensitiveness and an amazing facility in seeing a joke almost before it is uttered.

The next day I received the following letter from the editorial rooms of one of the principal magazines of New York:

Dear Countess de Bryas:

When several ladies asked me what I thought of your address, I said that so far as I could see it had but one fault: 58 namely, that your English was too good. You made just one error in pronunciation and one in grammar. I was afraid you were not going to make any, and when, toward the end of your speech, you said distri *bu* ted I involuntarily exclaimed, “God bless you!” Thereupon you followed it with “woken up.” I want to add an expression of my hope that you will—if you can—be not so perfect in our language! There is a certain human appeal in a foreigner's speech in one's own language which is never attained by “one of ourselves.” Of course I agree that French and American people ought to be —as they are—so united in a common work that to each the language of the other will become easier and easier. I cannot fancy any one of us, however, speaking French so spontaneously and idiomatically as you spoke English yesterday. I cannot but feel that your address might have an even humaner appeal, if you would only make some little mistake *on purpose* , now and then!

I have never felt so flattered in my entire life. When I think that my dear father does not know a word of English, and that my English is purely Parisian! Nevertheless, as the hint was a good one, I never altered my error during my tour and always said “distri *bu* ted” and “woken up,” whenever those words occurred to me. And I think I will keep on “distri *bu* ting and “wokening up” all through life as a pleasant souvenir of America.

One evening I dined seated next to Mr. Gerard. The dinner was given by friends, who have a lovely house, with a rare collection of Chinese screens and tables in lacquer. It was the first house we had seen so far in New York furnished with so many 59 Chinese works of art, which have been the furor in Paris since the war. The former American Ambassador to Berlin is very entertaining in his conversation about the kaiser, and he advised me to see the film made from his remarkable book, “My Four Years in Germany.”

“In some parts of the film,” he explained, “the kaiser really appears on the screen, but naturally the action part of the drama is played by an actor who impersonates the emperor.”

Some friends took us to see Wall Street and the “curb market” in Broad Street, near by. The market is one of the funniest sights in the world—a real Babel of confusion. Men in the street shout as if their very lives depended on the volume of noise they produce, and Americans have no humming-bee voices! They shout to other men who are looking on from the windows of adjoining buildings; their bodies protruding so far out in their excitement, that they look like creatures who are independent of the laws of gravitation.

When the men in the street have tried in vain, in all the notes of the scale, to make themselves heard by their window accomplices, they try movements of the hands, arms, head and legs for communicating information, in the nautical style of language! Never in my whole life had I seen any such wild gesticulating—a regular St. Vitus's dance en masse.

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I always thought that being a business man meant remaining quietly seated in a comfortable armchair, but then I realized that nothing so inactive could ever please an American, and that, therefore, out-of-door exercise has been introduced as part of the game. Stock-broking is almost as agile a following as base-ball.

After that we went through New Street, where the houses so nearly scrape the sky that walking there seems like walking in a canyon. In the street, which forms the hollow of the gorge, it is dark and depressing. The wind, held captive between the high walls of masonry, blows wildly, and revenges itself on the feminine sex almost as much as it does in front of the Flat-iron Building. Indeed, its antics are very amusing to others, much less to oneself, when one happens to be a woman. It is true that:

The devil sends the wicked wind That sends our skirts knee-high, But God is just and sends the dust That gets in the bad man's eye.

Fortunately, it was a very dusty morning.

Afterward we visited the “Cathedral of Commerce,” which we admired when we sailed into New York Harbor. It is a most exquisite piece of Gothic architecture, and its perfectly straight and pure lines reminded me of the interior of the cathedral 61 of Leon in Spain. This Woolworth Building is a city in itself, sixty stories high. Twelve thousand people work daily in its offices. I have read somewhere that the top part of the sky-scraper always oscillates, and no wonder.

Men in this country take their hats off most politely when they happen to meet women in elevators. But this custom does not extend to all parts of the town. In New York, the same man who will remove his hat in the elevator at the Plaza, the Vanderbilt, the Ritz, or the Biltmore, as a sign of deference to womanhood, will keep it on when he is “downtown”—that business realm of the city that he considers his own particular kingdom.

We were astonished, therefore, to see all the men keep their hats on as we set foot in the “express elevator” of the Woolworth Building, which shot us up past innumerable floors without a stop. When we came down, after having admired the wonderful panoramic view of New York, we heard a great noise of air rushing between the elevator itself and its steel shaft. We were told that this was the result of a clever idea of the architect, an ingenious arrangement of air-cushions which would uphold the elevator in case of accident.

An experiment, it seems, had been tried and the elevator was loaded with a seven-thousand-ton weight and a glass of water filled to the brim; then the cables were removed and the cargo was dropped 62 through space from the forty-fifth floor! It is easy to imagine what a horrible smash-up there would have been had the experiment failed; but the seven

thousand tons came down perfectly smoothly, owing to the resistance of the air, and when the elevator reached the ground floor, not a drop of water had been spilled from the glass.

As I was told this reassuring story my eyes rested on two mammoth women who were going down with us, and so great was my feeling of security that it was not at all affected by this sight. What wonderful things we do hear in America!

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CHAPTER VI SPEAKING FOR THE THIRD LIBERTY LOAN

FROM this day on until the end of the Liberty Loan drive we were under the orders of the Treasury Department of Washington. The first city to which we were sent was Boston, but as we did not know in the least what the committee's plans were, we had not the slightest idea whether we were to remain there for one lecture only or for several days.

We left by the one o'clock train and much enjoyed the comfortable seats of the “parlor-car,” which is an unknown luxury in our country. As we settled down we ventured a few joking remarks to the colored porter, having already realized, on the other trains, the negro's keen sense of humor We were immediately rewarded by the sight of two rows of perfectly white teeth smiling at us to the accompaniment of a twinkle in the eye. I suppose it is due to the contrast of the black and the white that their teeth seem much whiter than those of the people of our own race.

As regards the colored porters I should like to say here what a blessing I consider their color is 64 to them, for they are the only travelers on the train who to all appearance remain unsullied by the smoke and the dust. Truly, nature seems to have created them specially for their work, and what a boon they are!

In France, once the traveler is settled in his compartment, no one comes to look out for him. In America the porter not only takes you to your seat and settles you down comfortably into it, but is every ready with many other little services, such, for instance,

as bringing you a paper bag in which to put your hat. For the American women take their hats off when in the train, letting their hair get all the dust and carefully protecting their hats. Perhaps the time may not be far distant when Americans, who are such clean and hygienic people, will also give travelers paper bags to put on their heads.

Well, once comfortably settled down, one can either sleep or abandon oneself to reading, knowing that the smiling colored man will be sure to come in time to prepare one for the arrival. Porters seem especially endowed with marvelous memories and never by any chance let you pass your destination. Then before you get out of the car they brush your dress, rub the dust off your shoes, clean up your hand-luggage, and help you generally to look your best. In fact, one might go straight to a party on getting out of the train and feel perfectly assured 65 that one's dress was quite right and one's hat and shoes quite free from dust.

We were met at the station by the chairman of the Boston Women's Liberty Loan Committee and told on the way to the hotel that we were expected to remain in Boston several days. Whereupon we remembered the ex-governor's kind invitation, and from the hotel my sister called him up on the telephone.

“Why, what are you doing at that hotel, you independent women! On the boat I invited you to my house.”

So we moved our quarters to his home and I immediately sent word to my mother, saying: “I am writing to you from the house of a bachelor, with whom we are staying here in Boston. Don't be startled, it is very *comme il faut* in this part of the globe for two young women to stay at a gentleman's house, though an impossible and unheard-of proceeding in France.”

If only my relatives could have seen us in those days they would have been in fits of laughter and thought nothing on earth more entertaining than the “job” I had taken up!

Every day brought me fresh surprises, and circumstances made me do things that even in my wildest dreams I had never pictured myself doing.

I was taken from the stage of a theater to the pulpit of a Methodist Church, from which solemn 66 and eminently ecclesiastical position I talked to the congregation. My sister told me afterward she imagined the astonishment and amazement that would have been expressed on the faces of our friends abroad had they seen a woman and, above all, a friend of theirs speaking at a religious gathering in our country; for in our Catholic churches in Paris women are not even authorized to sing as soloists.

The next day it was perched on the table of one of the most important shops of the town, something like the Bon Marché in Paris, that I addressed the crowd of purchasers and salespeople, at least eight hundred persons, and urged them to subscribe to the loan.

I was “scheduled” (this is the American word for “appointed”) to speak twice a day, one lecture being in Boston, and the other in a neighboring town such as Georgetown, Newton or Worcester.

Those four days spent in Massachusetts, going from one set of people to another, seeing both the poor and the rich, the working-classes as well as the intellectuals, showed me that there was still great need of Allied propaganda to counteract the influence exercised by the Germans. The United States is a difficult country to manage; many and various problems seem to arise at each step, and I marveled greatly at the power that commands it all. I was told that this war is making out of the inhabitants 67 of the United States the American Nation; through it, unity is being created. It is bringing together under the same flag the various nationalities of which the country is composed, but which up to the present had lived independently in this hospitable land, which ever welcomes adventurous spirits. Nothing was of greater interest to us than the way in which the Third Liberty Loan drive was conducted here. One thing worth mentioning was the organization known as the

“Four-Minute Men.” Its members worked with incessant activity and patriotism for their country. They had thirty-one thousand members.

In each town a committee was formed called “The Four-Minute-Men Organization,” composed of volunteer speakers who gave their services to the government for the duration of the war. They partly gave up their business and devoted their time and their energy to speaking wherever it was judged necessary to be in touch with the masses.

They were then speaking for the Liberty Loan and when that loan was fully subscribed they undertook another campaign on behalf of the Red Cross, after which it was to be for the War-Savings Stamps, and the War Chest. In America, public opinion is formed largely through speech-making and personal contact with the people. I have seen nowhere else such eager listeners, always anxious to hear and understand what those recognized as 68 capable of giving out information have to tell them.

I don't know how this educational method would take in my own country, but it would be interesting to put it on trial, for it might give unexpectedly good results; although I wonder whether our laboring classes would wish to listen to any speaker other than an advanced socialist. The press is the principal educator of the masses in France.

In the United States during the war the Four-Minute Men were, I should say, almost the principal factors in the moulding of public opinion. Their speeches, although different in form, were founded on the same basis, the fundamental ideas coming from the one source, The Committee on Public Information at Washington.

The members of the Four-Minute-Men Organization were liable to be sent anywhere, to any town where their services might be required. One saw them wherever one went while the loan drive was on—in hotels, theaters, shops, in the open air, at factories. They are requested to speak during four minutes only, as their name implies. But imagine how

impossible for a patriotic human speaker facing an eager public and with no one to call, “time's up,” limiting himself conscientiously to the two hundred and forty seconds!

I myself must confess to having failed, although one evening I was nearly a “four-minute woman,” and missed it only by three little minutes, and 69 proud indeed I was! This is how it happened: It was in a theater, and I, with another speaker, had been asked to speak from the stage between the acts. We had made a bet as to which of us could make the shorter speech, limiting it if possible to the required four minutes. The other speaker, being a man, certainly thought he would win; for, remembering woman's reputation as a talker, he felt sure I was incapable of stopping in time. However, I had the happy surprise of winning, speaking only seven minutes, whereas he talked for twelve.

Monsieur Tardieu telegraphed, asking us to be present at a big meeting in New York in order that I might speak with him for the loan. We dined with him at the Plaza, at a very big dinner-party given by the French colony of New York. My sister and I were the only women present, and I was completely ignorant of what was expected of me in the way of a speech.

“You are to speak in French to-night, I hear,” my neighbor told me confidentially. “I suppose it is to be done as a surprise, and I am delighted, for a part of your audience will be composed of your own country-people.”

“In French!” I exclaimed. “Why that is the first news I have had of it!”

A stately and delightful elderly gentleman, who looked as if he certainly held a very important position in life (what we call in French a “big bonnet” 70 or a “fat vegetable,” and you “a big gun,” I believe), spoke to me across the table:

“I am very glad to hear you are speaking in English to-night, for otherwise a part of your audience would not understand.”

And turning to my neighbor, who had heard this remark, I suggested:

“Well, don't you think I had perhaps better try Esperanto or Volapuc?”

Monsieur Tardieu and I decided to speak in both English and French, so that all might be satisfied.

The meeting was held in a crowded hall, and I could see the boxes in the gallery filled with people. The speakers of the evening and the members of the French colony took seats on the platform; but my sister—who is, I may say, of a somewhat retiring nature—went into one of the boxes and was much amused when the lady next her, to whom she had been introduced, suddenly remarked:

“I wonder what that girl is doing, sitting on the platform all alone with all those men!”

“It is my sister, and she is going to address the meeting.”

“Oh!” exclaimed the lady, seizing her opera-glasses at once.

Mr. Myron Herrick, whom I had known as a most brilliant ambassador in Paris, and who gave such striking proofs of his moral courage during the memorable days that preceded the great battle of 71 the Marne, was the first speaker; and he won the hearts of his hearers by his charm of manner. Monsieur Tardieu, who had studied English for only a year, was convincingly optimistic and carried the audience away with his absolute faith in victory. Then came a brilliant and witty American orator, and finally I spoke in both languages.

Monsieur Tardieu, next whom I was seated, whispered to me:

“I must take French leave and run off to make another speech for the loan, in a Methodist Church, and I will be back here in half an hour.”

During that time a group of ten or twelve American soldiers, who had just returned from the front in France, were ushered upon the platform. The feelings of the crowd rose to the highest degree of enthusiasm and they applauded frantically.

One soldier, a mere lad with a boyish and very engaging countenance, was pushed forward to the front of the platform, the public shouting to him, “Speak to us in French!” He had evidently never been asked to make a speech before; and certainly his knowledge of French was very limited, which made his talk all the more amusing. The crowd was in fits of laughter, and he himself joined heartily in the general hilarity as he struggled with his words and ended by explaining in English that he was greatly indebted to Frenchwomen, as one of them had once given him a piece of soap at the 72 front—a gift that he was needing badly at the time and that he had cherished as the most precious thing in the world.

Then a tall and magnetic-looking man mounted the platform while the soldiers were marching out. He had great talent for convincing his audience, and he was remarkable for the manner in which he could induce them to subscribe.

“We want to get sixty thousand dollars to-night,” he shouted; and for half an hour he never ceased talking, making jokes, telling stories, complimenting generous subscribers, until he had so dazzled the public by his brilliant personality that almost everybody in the room felt under a personal obligation to please him and buy the bonds. When the thirty minutes were up he exclaimed triumphantly:

“We have gone many times over the top to-night, and I have the pleasure of announcing subscriptions to the amount of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.”

And, indeed, I felt as we drove back to the hotel that one million two hundred and fifty thousand francs would provide many munitions for the soldiers in the trenches over there, and that the evening had truly not been spent in vain!

73

CHAPTER VII EXPERIENCES IN FACTORIES

WE took the train for Philadelphia in the early morning, and as soon as we arrived there several representatives of the Men's Liberty Loan Committee, under whose orders the Treasury Department of Washington had placed me during my stay in Pennsylvania, motored us to Chester.

“You will give an open-air address to seven thousand workmen to-day at noon. Not only are these men making munitions, but the Chester plant has already sent over to France the biggest gun manufactured so far in America, and is ready to send a second one in a few days.”

After an hour's drive we reached the plant and as noon had not yet struck, the director took us to visit various interesting sections of the factory. Then we were taken to a large open air space and asked to get up into a brightly decorated and artistic-looking stand, all covered with the flags of the Allies.

A government official, three Canadian officers, and I were the speakers of the day.

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“You will certainly receive a very warm reception from our men,” said the director. “They are wonderfully patriotic in their feelings, and this, I believe, is largely due to the influence we have exercised over them by trying to teach them what the war really means to America. You will, I dare say, be astonished to hear that six months ago not one of these workers could sing the ‘Star-Spangled Banner,’ nor did they even know that America had a national anthem.”

As he was saying these words a bell rang, announcing noon, and the factory band, composed exclusively of workmen belonging to the plant, marched forward and took

its place beside the stand. Then the seven thousand men came flocking out from the adjoining buildings, and I could see their eager faces expectantly turned toward us.

The band conductor through the megaphone invited every one to sing “God Save the King.” We rose to our feet while it was played and sung, and the Canadian officers addressed the crowd in turns.

Then the man with the megaphone announced the “Marseillaise” and it was my turn to speak. Never in my whole life had I experienced such profound emotion as at that moment. The seven thousand workmen went almost frantic in their cheering of my country; and stretching far away before me I could see eager and honest faces lit up by the greatest 75 enthusiasm. Some of the men sent their caps flying high up into the air; others waved their little flags as a sign of rejoicing, while they all shouted, applauded, and whistled for fully three long minutes, as I stood waiting to speak, with heart throbbing—oh! throbbing terribly hard, from emotion and true happiness! for I thoroughly understood the depth of feeling underlying this demonstration, and what it really meant for France in the very near future.

Then I spoke from heart to heart with these men, not eloquently, by any means, but very simply, telling them what was going on “over there,” and urging them to work hard at the munitions that were to protect the lives of their own boys fighting in the trenches, and to help deliver the suffering ones in my country.

After that the government official made a stirring and patriotic speech and every one of us sang the “Star-Spangled Banner” at the end of the meeting.

Then before I had time to leave the stand I heard the men shouting: “Don't go yet! We must shake hands with you first,” and they rushed forward to the platform. My sister and I bent over, and our hands and arms were clutched by innumerable hands grasping for

ours. I think every one of those seven thousand workmen came up to shake hands with us.

76

When I speak in public, I almost invariably take my gloves off, because I am sometimes foolishly tempted to think that in this way the contact between my public and myself is more quickly established—almost as though through the tips of the fingers. But at Chester I had forgotten to observe my usual custom. Some of the workmen had such perfect manners that they exclaimed apologetically:

“We have spoiled your light gloves with our black hands! Is n't it too bad!”

“Why, I am more proud than I can say of the color you have given it,” I replied gaily. “It will seem as if I, also, were making munitions for the boys.”

The director then took us to luncheon in the factory and as we sat down at the table he said to me: “May I formulate a wish expressed by my workmen?”

“Pray do! I am ready to do anything to prove my delight at having found such a marvelous audience as the one I have addressed this morning.”

“Well, they have asked that you will part with your glove and give it to them. We will have a frame made for it and it will be hung in the place of honor in the factory as a souvenir of France.”

As can be imagined, I felt prouder than ever before in my life, I think, when I handed my glove to the director after having signed my name inside 77 it, together with the signatures of my sister and the government official.

“After luncheon,” said the director, “we will ask you and your sister another favor, that of signing your names on our big gun; for it will leave Chester in a few days, en route for the front, where I hope it will accomplish a bit of excellent work for France.”

The thought occurred to me that our host and his workmen resembled very closely in some of their manners the medieval knights of King Arthur's Round Table!

To be able to witness in France the sight of six thousand colored men and women gathered under one roof, we should have to organize a huge negro congress, and have them come from Africa especially for the great occasion. But over here, a Liberty Loan meeting is all that is required to afford such a dusky sight!

One evening the chief of the Four-Minute Men, with another well-known speaker, came to fetch us to attend a colored meeting. When the motor-car stopped at the theater door, a dark crowd was gathered there, awaiting admission. A “cop,” as the Americans call the policeman, came to escort us from the car to the entrance door of this moving-picture theater.

Within, six thousand colored people were already 78 assembled. We sat with the speakers of the evening, who were mostly colored men, two or three only being of our own race.

The meeting opened by an invocation by a colored preacher. The reverent and profoundly religious attitude of this throng was most impressive. The colored band then played with a wild cadence that nearly made one jump to one's feet. Negro music generally affects me in the feet and the shoulders, giving me an intense desire to do a cake-walk. While this music was being played the room was momentarily lit up by, the happy smiles of the negroes, who thoroughly enjoyed their band.

“There is no difference between the colored troops and the white ones. They are all alike, and your boys are the best fighters of all!”

One of the speakers, turning to the band, addressed them thus: “And when the Allies enter Berlin, it is you, the colored band, who will precede the troops, playing the march just heard, which will fill our boys with enthusiasm as they enter victoriously into the German capital.”

The enthusiasm aroused by these words was tremendous. The men applauded, and the women manifested their joy by the fluttering of their white handkerchiefs, waved in token of contentment and approval.

Of the many places at which I was asked to speak during the Third Liberty Loan drive, none seemed 79 to me of greater interest than Hog Island, the largest shipyard in the world.

Hog Island is situated outside Philadelphia and is of a marshy nature, which at the outset presented many difficulties to the establishment of a plant. Perfect miracles were accomplished, however, by the government's Shipping Board, and despite much criticism, the plant had grown in six months to the size of a large city, consisting of wooden buildings where twenty-three thousand men worked day and night.

Before delivering the address we were taken to visit the *Aquizconza* , the first ship to be launched. The ceremony took place a few months later in the presence of President Wilson. At the period of our visit the future vessel was in the rudimentary stage. All along the river innumerable sheds had been erected, roofing in the wooden nests in which the ships were soon to come into existence.

The chief of the Secret Service was our guide, for we had been placed in his care. He took us to visit one of the four fire posts established on the plant. We found the firemen all equipped and ready to start with their engines at three minutes' notice in case the alarm were sounded.

“Have you ever had a fire?” I asked our guide.

“No, not so far,” was the answer. “But we have to be particularly careful, for notwithstanding the strictest surveillance, we might have German 80 agents introducing themselves here in the disguise of workmen and setting fire to the buildings, which, being nearly all made of wood, could quickly start a conflagration that would reduce Hog Island to ashes.

“I will now show you,” he added, “by what means we guarantee the plant against such a disaster. Not only have we this equipment of firemen and engines, but the Shipping Board has introduced a new idea—that of building a tower from the summit of which it is an easy matter to survey the entire plant—and if you don't mind climbing, I think it will interest you to go up.”

So we mounted into the tower by a spiral staircase that led us to a platform lighted by a window; and here we found the guardian.

We had to go still higher up to reach the summit of the tower, and the only means of access to this part was a ladder. Our guide, who was extremely nice and full of American thoughtfulness, preceded us in our ascension, telling the guardian meanwhile to look out at the window. When I had climbed almost to the top, I looked back and saw the good man with his face still glued to the panes, and the thought passed through my mind that a Frenchman would certainly never have obeyed the order as this guard had done!

Then from the open-air platform we had a complete view of Hog Island, stretching away for miles 81 in every direction. From here the slightest sign of suspicious smoke could very easily be detected by a vigilant observer.

“Only two nights ago,” said the chief of the Secret Service, “we discovered a German agent, who had surrounded one of our principal wooden buildings with straw, over which

he had poured kerosene. We were fortunate enough to catch him just as he was lighting the match to carry out his infernal plot."

"I suppose your police must be numerous?" I inquired.

"Yes, but most of my men are disguised as laborers, and no one suspects that they belong to my organization. This plant has twenty-three thousand workmen, and in the first six months of its existence, up to date, one hundred and twenty thousand laborers have worked here. This will give you an idea of our difficulties, and also of the extraordinary way in which our workmen in America shift from one plant to another in the hope always of getting higher wages."

Our guide called up the guardian and this time the two men followed us in our descent of the ladder.

After that we were taken to the platform, situated in the open air, from which I addressed several thousand workmen at noon, and I found them, like the audiences at Chester, most enthusiastic.

82

Among the speakers was an English captain who had made his escape from Germany, where he had been a prisoner. He had a wonderful way of relating anecdotes, and when he finished his speech, the men called out to him: "We want another story!"

"Very well," said the clever Englishman. "I have another one that I know you would enjoy, but I will tell it only if twenty of you subscribe for more bonds."

And in a flash twenty hands went up in the air.

"And now the story, we want the story!" shouted the crowd again, like children.

And so the captain described in his most vivid manner how an American in the trenches had fought with a German soldier and killed him.

“The American saw the Hun coming stealthily toward him, so he took off his coat and rolled up his shirt-sleeves as if he were going to play a game of baseball.” And the captain took off his own coat and rolled up his sleeves by way of demonstration, the workmen gazing at him spellbound.

“Then the American gave a big leap and bounded empty-handed over the parapet in this way!” The captain gave a leap himself—without, however, jumping over the edge of the stand.

By this time the crowd was gasping.

“Then he rushed madly at the German, like a tiger, and caught him by the throat, holding him 83 tight, and tighter, and still tighter, his fingers digging into the flesh and sinking deeper and deeper until ” The captain's hand shot out into space as if he were strangling the German, and as his fingers slowly closed on the imaginary throat, the workmen yelled with savage delight, some of them closing their eyes as if the better to enjoy an emotion that was stirring unsuspected depths in their natures.

That day closed the Third Liberty Loan campaign and I learned afterwards that there was not a single man among the twenty-three thousand laborers of Hog Island who had not subscribed for at least a fifty-dollar bond.

Patriotism is blossoming like a vigorous plant on the new continent and not only in the souls of native Americans, but equally in the souls of those who emigrated only yesterday from the various parts of the old world.

CHAPTER VIII OVER THE TOP

THE Third Liberty Loan drive ended, and the United States was “over the top!” Several billion dollars had been subscribed, and of this sum I am proud and delighted to have been the means of obtaining from subscribers one million dollars.

“How high is the top?” will probably be the question of my Parisian friends. “Never too high for the Americans to go over,” I will answer. “They are capable of climbing any heights in such a cause, and if the Germans could but have thoroughly realized this, they would that very day have laid down their arms and stopped the fight.”

All through the Union, every town had subscribed far beyond the quota assigned to it by the Treasury Department at Washington, and as soon as each city had reached the financial goal a liberty flag was hoisted as a public sign of recognition that its citizens had done their duty and were ready to surpass themselves in their patriotic efforts.

In whatever they take up Americans always concentrate all their energies on success. It is as 85 though they looked upon every enterprise as a splendid game to develop muscles or mental powers, as the case may be. The way they do a thing does not matter half so much as the result obtained. They mean to succeed and they almost invariably carry through even seemingly impossible plans by sheer force of will, allied to an indomitable self-confidence. And once they attain their goal, they make themselves a fresh one in order to attain fresh successes. The very essence of their natures is the love of struggle, and it makes them enter gladly into competition not only with one another, but also with themselves, in order to break their own records.

I believe they are right; we spend too much time perhaps in Europe thinking exclusively about the manner in which a thing is to be executed, rather than the result to be obtained; and after all it is results that control the world.

In France public speaking is an art in itself, whereas here it is considered as the most rapid method of handling masses of people and educating them. The Liberty Loan campaigns

are teaching the people to save money, a thing that was formerly not understood in the United States, that country where money is made and spent in one and the same breath. So a good Liberty Loan speaker may not be the one who makes the most finished speeches, but the one who gets the most money out of his 86 audience. As an example I relate the following.

At the moving-picture show which we attended one evening, a man mounted the platform and showed an obviously new straw hat and called out in a powerful voice:

“I just bought it to-day, and had hoped it would spend the summer with me. But for my country I am ready to separate myself from my new acquisition. So for a thousand dollar bond, I will offer you the diverting sight of the wilful destruction of my new hat. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I will stick my fist right through it. Now [and he raised his voice louder than ever] who will subscribe for a thousand dollar bond? Who will give the thousand dollars?”

“Five hundred dollars,” called a voice.

“No. I want the thousand dollars. I won't spoil my new hat for less. Come along now, a good bid. Who'll give it?”

“A thousand!” shouted a man's voice from the balcony. And the speaker, with a happy smile, thrust his closed fist vigorously through the crown of his straw hat, shooting it straight toward the generous subscriber.

America was certainly becoming more and more wonderful to us. We had gone to a theater expecting to see “movies” and, instead, we found a man inviting bids on his new hat and another giving 87 a small fortune just to enjoy the sight of its destruction. All this was comic, though it was inspired by true patriotic feeling.

During the war a very large number of the women in the United States wore uniforms. Each town and each relief-work society had its particular uniform varying in color and

design. Nothing was more puzzling for a European than to make out what they were intended to represent. I suggest that a guide book called the “W-U” or the “Women's Uniforms,” presented gratis to foreigners arriving in the United States, would certainly be of great help. A brief description and explanation of all the different uniforms is all that would be required for understanding what work these women are accomplishing.

American women look very smart and alert in their uniforms, having a particularly business-like appearance. At the first glance one feels sure that they carry out the work confided to them splendidly. But being myself a French woman, I must confess that I have no personal interest in women's uniforms and, generally speaking, we have not, except in the case of a limited number of Red Cross nurses, worn other than civilian clothes during the war.

In France, a woman always looks unmistakably feminine. But in America it often happened that I could not make out to which sex the wearer of 88 the uniform belonged; it became a sort of guessing game, a living puzzle.

I remember one morning in the New York subway looking at two people standing up in a very crowded car. I could only see the upper part of these two khaki-clad travelers. One of them had apparently not followed the American fashion of wearing the hair cut away from the ears, the neck and the temples and I was criticising his hair as being a little too long for this new American fashion. His companion, whom I then took to be a blond, had hidden all her hair under her military cap.

It happened shortly afterward that I found myself standing close to this couple, and to my utter amazement, the “woman” had a man's voice, and the “man,” a woman's. Yes that was it. The woman proved to be the man and the man the woman.

The man was very young and perfectly clean-shaven, his smiling face looked childish and gentle, which accounted for my terrible blunder in taking him for a possible suffragette.

This was a lesson for me and I made up my mind henceforth to wait until I heard people speak before classifying them.

I suppose Christopher Columbus was as puzzled as I was then when he landed on the New Continent, wondering which were the Indians and which were their wives.

89

It is always interesting while traveling to meet the various celebrated people who fill or have filled prominent positions in their country. And so we were extremely pleased at receiving an invitation to the home of Colonel and Mrs. Roosevelt. We had been given a letter of introduction to them, and they very charmingly invited us to luncheon at Oyster Bay, their country place, an hour from New York. We went there by train and found their motor-car at the station. We drove along lovely roads to the ex-President's home. On our arrival the car door was opened by a smiling gentleman of charming manners, and we soon recognised him as Colonel Roosevelt himself.

We entered the house, which is built in the colonial style, and were greeted by Mrs. Roosevelt, who received us with the most delightful simplicity. Before luncheon we visited the grounds, from which we enjoyed a lovely view over the sound.

The meal being strictly “Hooverized” was a short one, few dishes were served, and throughout it all we were entirely absorbed by Colonel Roosevelt's brilliant and animated conversation.

After luncheon we admired the wonderful collection of animals shot by our host in Africa. The trophies decorate various rooms of the house and principally the big hall where the President and his family spend much of their time.

Colonel Roosevelt showed us his precious and 90 unique collection of autographed photographs, one signed by a world-known personage none other than Wilhelm II, German Emperor.

We recollect that Colonel Roosevelt was received at Potsdam by the kaiser several years before the European conflict. The emperor entertained his guest with the greatest hospitality and invited him to be present at the review of the German troops. Photographs were taken of these two personages conversing together on horseback, and these are the ones we were shown at Oyster Bay.

Wilhelm II presented the autographed photographs to Colonel Roosevelt with a selection of intimate thoughts written on the back of each one. Bethmann-Holweg, his famous chancellor, came the next morning to ask for his sovereign's gift to be returned. He evidently did not then seem to consider it a “scrap of paper,” and he was very anxious to get it out of Colonel Roosevelt's possession on account of some of the very imprudent declarations made thereon.

Colonel Roosevelt also showed us a caricature of himself and the kaiser that appeared in Punch. They are represented making faces at each other. Colonel Roosevelt is seen with a thin face and the kaiser's moustaches, whereas the latter has a round face and energetic jaw resembling that of the ex-President of the United States.

A friend of Colonel Roosevelt, who was also a 91 guest that day, read us those wonderful words on our dear beloved France written by the ex-President the previous year, and published separately on the fourteenth of July, “Basille Day.”

They are certainly beautiful and heartfelt words, and I recall them with great emotion.

France embodies all of loveliness and of valor. Beauty is her handmaiden, and strength her shield-bearer, and the shining courage of her daughters has matched the courage of her dauntless sons. For three and a half terrible years she has walked, high of heart, through the Valley of the Shadow. Her body is in torture, but her forehead is alight with the beauty of the morning. Never in history has there been such steadfast loyalty in the doing

of dangerous duty, such devotion to country, such splendor of service and sacrifice, and great shall be her reward—for she has saved the soul of the world.

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CHAPTER IX AMERICAN GENEROSITY

IF with X-rays one could see through the Americans, I should not be astonished if their hearts were found to be larger than those of the people of other nations. Providence has certainly endowed them with a greater physical organism, knowing that their power of expression would be superior to that of other people. For truly, Americans seem literally to lavish their hearts upon one, pouring them forth freely and yet having a reserve to the point of overflowing.

Their reputation of being above all business-like is quite wrong judgment, given by foreigners who have certainly seen nothing beyond Wall Street. But a whole nation cannot be judged by one street of one city. France cannot be judged by the boulevards of Paris, Montmartre, and the Moulin Rouge. These are the great attractions purposely organized for foreigners, but they are not at all typical of French life.

Americans are dominated by their hearts and easily carried away by their emotions and their 93 ideals. A New Yorker said to me the other day:

“Business for us is a fascinating game. The gambling side of it attracts us much more than the possession of wealth. We like coming out of it victorious and we enjoy the emotion that it provides for us. When we have the money we spend it freely and like to have others share our pleasure. Think of what our millionaires have done with their money. They have contributed to the greatness of the nation and through them schools, universities, hospitals, museums, libraries, have been erected. The whole race has benefitted through their wealth.”

I admire also the way in which Americans take to heart the embellishment of their own particular city. It is a splendid spirit that undoubtedly contributes to the greatness of the country and keeps it perpetually progressing. The emulation between the towns obliges the citizens to take a greater interest in the one they live in.

I often had examples of this public-spirited feeling and it reminded me of an American lady who told me that she had some beautiful old family heirloom lace which she was going to present to the museum in her town.

“But don't you wish to keep it for your children and their descendants?” I asked.

“No; I want my town to benefit by anything I can offer it that will add to its value.”

Mr. George Creel came to see us at the Vanderbilt one Sunday afternoon as we were passing through the city. He proposed that I should extend my work and that I should become an agent of the American Government and make an extensive tour through the States for war propaganda. This idea pleased us intensely as we realized that the work accomplished in this way would be far more helpful to our country.

We at once spoke to Monsieur Tardieu about this proposition and he advised us to accept. Then a committee meeting was held at which some members of the American Committee for Devastated France met Mr. George Creel and the arrangements were made.

We had, however, to go to Washington for a day to decide several important questions for our tour for the Public Information Committee. So far this branch of the American Government had not yet sent any women on a special propaganda mission through the country and it was a new experiment that they wanted to try. My work was to consist mostly in making speeches to spur on war-work in shipping plants, labor temples, and in factories engaged on munitions, aëroplanes and various other war productions.

We spent but a few hours in Washington traveling two nights back and forth from New York, and once more I had the opportunity of admiring the 95 American generosity that has become proverbial the world over.

Before taking the midnight train we were invited by the Shipping Board to a big dinner given at Chevy Chase in honor of Monsieur Tardieu, who was leaving that night for France.

Chevy Chase is a very fashionable club situated in Maryland, a state which is not dry as the District of Columbia is, and that accounts for its popularity.

I happened to be seated next to our French High Commissioner but the chair on my left remained empty all through the dinner. The famous Mr. Schwab was to have been its occupant, but he had missed his train and did not reach Washington in time. So my nearest neighbor was Mr. C—, an important member of the Shipping Board. He leant forward toward me and most charmingly said:

“Allow me, Madame, to drink to your health, and to France's victory in this war.”

Whereupon I immediately raised my glass and replied:

“Let me express my thanks herewith to France's generous ally, the great American nation which in this struggle represents the weight in the balance that will assure victory in the cause of Freedom.”

Once started, both Mr. C—and myself might have gone on exchanging patriotic compliments “ad eternum,” but I was to discover that evening 96 that Americans do not merely express their feelings in words, but far more efficiently still do they express them in generous actions. My neighbor concluded:

“Not only do I drink to your country's glorious cause, Madame, but I wish to contribute to-night to alleviating her sufferings. I am happy to ask you to accept five thousand dollars to be used by you as you think best for the children and women of France.”

I was almost speechless at such generosity; all the more so that I had not mentioned my work in America. Suddenly a young-looking man seated at the far side of the table, Mr. P—of the Shipping Board having followed the conversation with interest, raised his glass and drank to my health.

I replied gaily, returning the compliment.

“No, no; I won't allow that!” cried Mr. C—, with conviction, and, turning to Mr. P—, “You shall not be allowed to drink to our guest's health unless you also give her five thousand dollars for France.”

“Nothing will stop me from raising my glass in honor of a Frenchwoman. Madame. Here are the five thousand dollars I owe you.”

And Mr. P—sent me a paper with his signature across the table.

It would be hard for me to analyse my sentiments at that moment. I don't know whether I 97 felt proud or filled with gratitude or moved to tears or what were my true feelings; but whatever it was I felt, I felt it most intensely.

I like to note down any little incident that may show the fraternal feeling between America and my own country—a feeling of which I get constant proof.

My sister had been suffering from her foot for a week, and only found time to have it attended to on our arrival in Philadelphia. A clever and celebrated surgeon, a friend of our cousin's, came several times and finally cured it. While conversing we had told him about our experiences at the hospital where we had volunteered as nurses at the beginning of

the war. On his last visit I had begged my cousin to inquire how much I was indebted to him. He refused any fee, and when my cousin insisted, he replied:

“In America you know nurses have all medical treatment free.”

Many touching instances of American kindness of heart came to our hearing, and we marveled much at the spirit of sacrifice and self-abnegation we met with almost everywhere. To them the war was not only a war, but it was a crusade, and they entered upon it with quite a religious feeling. The Americans have the qualities that youth alone can give. They are idealists, they are generous and impulsive; their emotions 98 are easily aroused, and they are in love with France with much the same sentiment as that which gives the school boy the desire to lay down his life in the cause of his first lady-love, filling him with dreams of adventure in which he becomes the “Red Cross Knight” rescuing Una from the hands of her enemies.

Amongst many other stories I remember hearing that there exists in Washington a charitable institution created for the purpose of housing old ladies of good Southern families which have fallen into poverty. The inmates of this organization possess no means whatever, being entirely provided for by this charitable society. When the war broke out these kind-hearted women were particularly distressed at not being able to come to the help of the many war misfortunes in Belgium and France, and then they had a most touching idea. They all voluntarily gave up taking sugar in their tea and coffee so that their sacrifice might make some one else happy across the ocean. Let us hope there may have been many among them who had no liking for sugar!

Not only do the Americans extend this kind-hearted goodwill to their fellow-mortals, but also to animals. In the big national parks the animals are never shot down, and they are allowed to live a free and undisturbed existence; in the Eastern cities the squirrels approach the visitors in the 99 public gardens, and come without any shyness to eat from their hands.

Better still, this general amenity of the American people extends itself also to nature, and I was very much delighted at the sight of a placard that an old Washington gentleman had placed on his lawn. Instead of the usual “Trespassing will be prosecuted,” he had written, “Please give the grass a chance!”

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CHAPTER X TOURING FOR DEVASTATED FRANCE

AMONGST the many interesting people we met in New York, none seemed to me more remarkable than Colonel House. His worldwide reputation and the atmosphere of mystery that seems to surround him made me all the more desirous of meeting him.

I had already made the acquaintance of Mrs. House, and her charming manner had quite won my heart, when one day I received a word from her inviting us to meet her husband.

Their home in New York is most attractive and yet simple, without any ostentatious excess of luxury. As we entered, the first thing that attracted my attention in the anteroom was a very good and fairly large photograph of the Victory of Samothrace, of which the original statue is in the museum of the Louvre in Paris. This picture seemed to me a good omen of what Colonel House, with his prophetic insight into the politics of the world was perhaps already foreseeing for us in the near future.

As soon as we had drunk our tea, our host invited 101 me into his study, where we might be more at leisure to talk. The room is a small one almost entirely lined with books; the furniture is simple, consisting of a large writing-table and two or three comfortable arm-chairs.

I had ample time to study the countenance of this celebrated man who is one of the truest patriots, in the broadest sense of the word, that has ever lived; for unlike many others

his motives seem to be absolutely free from any ambitious desire for personal honors or worldly attainment.

Few men have impressed me as being of such sincere simplicity, with such complete lack of any desire to “show off,” or to create a sensation of any kind. Colonel House does not apparently care to make any impression on his visitors, but rather he seems to study them, to weigh their capacities and their abilities, to penetrate their mentalities and their very souls with his keen searching gaze until they feel that his clear mind has judged them impartially, without either over-indulgence or over-severity.

His manners are extremely affable. Physically, Colonel House is fairly tall, slight, with refined, good features of which his eyes are the most remarkable.

It is often noticed that painters are possessed of eyes that seem really to study you, seeing what may escape less observant people; but their glance is 102 generally material or superficial, and I always have the impression that they are merely comparing values or noting contrasts in coloring. On the contrary, Colonel House's glance has the exceedingly rare quality of a singular penetration, and though outward details may escape his observation, I should be astonished if his appreciation of the personality he is studying was not remarkably accurate.

As we were leaving I told Mrs. House that we had accepted Mr. Creel's offer, and would make a propaganda tour through the States for the American Government.

“I am delighted to hear this good news,” she answered amiably, “and remember my words, Madame de Bryas, you and your sister are now going to make the trip of your lives.”

So with this pleasant prospect before us for the near future, I set to work to accomplish what had to be done for the object for which we had originally come.

During the next fortnight this work consisted of speaking for devastated France and our program once more took us to Boston, then to Providence, New Haven, Springfield, and again to New York and its neighborhood, Newark, White Plains, West Point, where we saw a parade of the cadets, and nothing was more picturesque than these young men in their lovely gray and white uniforms in 103 clear outline against the wonderfully green scenery along the Hudson river.

After that I lectured at Princeton, in Alexander Hall, then in Philadelphia and in several towns of Pennsylvania. Then after a trip to West Virginia we reached Washington, where we made the final arrangements with the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information for our tour “Out West.”

In the preceding three weeks I had lectured in fifteen different towns, and we were so exhausted by the time we reached Washington that the mere fact of being quietly seated in a comfortable armchair for a few minutes was enough to send us directly into the arms of Morpheus.

We had had many various and unusual experiences during those fatiguing days of rush. But many opportunities were offered us for doing and seeing things out of the ordinary routine. For instance, in Pennsylvania we had the distinction of sleeping in an insane asylum. You will perhaps think that by a few manifestations of the necessary symptoms we could have had the same privilege in our own country. But if that had happened to us there we could not have gone to America, which to us seemed of vital importance. The motive of our stay there was not to lecture to the inmates, although had our stay coincided with a Sunday morning, the doctor said he would have asked me to talk about the war at their religious service.

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We had rarely met with more charming hospitality than that accorded us at the asylum. We arrived there in the evening and when we were shown into our rooms, we glanced at the

door and found that the key was missing. We called the doctor's wife and asked whether we had not better lock ourselves in, as the doctor had told us that the insane patients had their quarters at the end of the passage. Never before had a key given me such a feeling of security, and it was with intense relief that I turned it vigorously in the lock. However no sound or cry disturbed our restful night. We woke up without any feeling of internment. Everything was so peaceful! We might have been in the Garden of Eden.

On leaving our room we met one of the doctor's patients, an insane woman without means who earned the little she had by working in the household. When she was told that we were here on behalf of the poor suffering women and children of France, this good-hearted creature thrust into my hand fifty cents. Her gift so spontaneously offered was certainly one of the most touching ones I had yet received, and it proved to me that in their moments of lucidity the hearts of these unfortunate creatures overflow with warm sympathy for the sufferings of others.

We visited the house and walked through the gardens from which we admired the asylum, a fine 105 piece of architecture of vast proportions, and very well situated.

We met several of the doctor's “special friends.” This is how he spoke of some of the patients when introducing them to us.

One of the insane men to whom we spoke had just been nursing one of his asylum comrades, who had had the unlucky idea of jumping through a second floor window, and had alighted in a somewhat damaged condition on the ground. The man had carefully attended to his friend and faithfully carried out the doctor's orders. He always noted down what he had done for the sick man and daily handed to the doctor a bulletin signed “Holy Ghost.”

Then we went over to see the women's section and were received there by one of the insane who addressed me thus:

“I would like you to take back a message to France. Will you tell them over there that *we* ” (and she turned round with a large sweep of the arm indicating the insane patients) “disapprove of the war.”

And so I am happy to be able to tell my compatriots that the only people I found in the United States disapproving of the war were the female inhabitants of an insane asylum.

During this frenzied traveling we had time to get accustomed to the Pullman cars and we cannot 106 understand why so many Americans complain of them, declaring them a horrid, uncomfortable, indecent mode of locomotion. We found it entertaining and full of the unexpected and we should have regretted had it been different as we should have been deprived of many amusing traveling experiences.

On one of our journeys I witnessed a scene of a highly comic nature between a white woman passenger and a colored porter.

It was toward midnight that this woman entered the Pullman car after I had taken possession of my berth. She was visibly out of breath, puffing and fussing considerably, and owing to her very decided plumpness experienced much difficulty in climbing into the upper section above my head. This accomplished, I heard her say to the colored man:

“I may ring you up later on.”

Then I went to sleep, but not for long. For soon after I was awakened by some rumbling noises in the berth above and the sound of the porter bringing the ladder.

Getting down was difficult as the train rounded many curves and more than once I feared a catastrophe. However, our stout fellow traveler got down safely at last and went for an airing along the car.

I could see her ample form clad in its white 107 wrapper, her black pigtail hanging down her back, walking up and down the passage like some bulky ghost. Presently she returned, still short of breath and managed with the help of the darky to reach her perch on high once more. And again all was quiet. This, however, did not last long.

I was not destined to sleep that night for the bell above my head rang unfailingly every quarter of an hour or so. And the same tactics were gone through. Toward three A. M., the summons being somewhat tardily answered by the porter, I heard the lusty breathing of my upper-berth neighbor, and through a slight opening between my curtains I caught sight of two legs dangling over the edge in close proximity to my head in the well-known posture of an angler fishing from a dock. Then an almost irresistible temptation came to me to tickle the soles of her feet, but I resisted with an effort and lay back wondering what was to follow.

A few seconds later I heard the darky approaching and the train rounded another curve. There was a piercing shriek and a fearful noise that made me sit up quickly. I looked through my curtain and there before my gaze lay a black and white jumble of human forms endeavoring to extricate themselves and get on to their feet again. The fidgety passenger of the upper berth, in trying to climb back to her elevated position as the train made a sharp turn, had lost her balance and had 108 collapsed, dragging the colored man along with her in her rapid and violent descent; and there they lay, white woman, black man, ladder, and all, a heap of confusion and shamefacedness, on the ground, while from every berth appeared the amused and inquiring heads of the other passengers, utterly incapable of restraining their hilarity in watching the desperate struggle of black and white to recover their natural position.

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CHAPTER XI ON A MISSION FOR THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Library of Congress

BEFORE starting on our long journey for the Committee on Public Information we spent ten days in Washington during which the following schedule was planned for us:

June 21–22—Harrisburg Pennsylvania

23–27—Pittsburgh Pennsylvania

28–29—Columbus Ohio

30–1—Dayton Ohio

July 2–4—Cincinnati Ohio

5–6—Indianapolis Indiana

7–8—Louisville Kentucky

9–10—Evansville Indiana

11–14—Saint Louis Missouri

15–17—Kansas City Missouri

18–19—Des Moines Iowa

20–21—Sioux City Iowa

22–24—Omaha Nebraska

25–26—Lincoln Nebraska

27–29—Denver Colorado

30–6—Colorado Springs Colorado

August 7–8—Pueblo Colorado

9–10—Salt Lake City Utah

11–12—Ogden Utah

13–17—Los Angeles California

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August 18–19—San Diego California

20–24—San Francisco California

25–26—Berkeley California

27–28—Sacramento California

29–31—Portland Oregon

September 1–2—Tacoma Washington

3–5—Seattle Washington

6–12—Spokane Washington

13–14—Butte Montana

15–16—Great Falls Montana

17–18—Helena Montana

19–20—Fargo North Dakota

21–22—Grand Forks North Dakota

23–25—Duluth Minnesota

26–27—Saint Paul Minnesota

28–30—Minneapolis Minnesota

October 1–2—Madison Wisconsin

6–10—Chicago Illinois

11–14—Detroit Michigan

15–16—Toledo Ohio

17–20—Cleveland Ohio

21–22—Youngstown Ohio

23–25—Buffalo New York

28–29—Syracuse New York

30–3—Albany New York

A charming lady who took an interest in our work, was appalled at the length of the trip we were about to undertake.

“Do not overdo it, my dear Madame de Bryas. You do not realize that in America we are quite capable of killing our friends through the intensity of our hospitality and our curiosity!”

“Is my life in danger then at last?” I inquired, much amused. “Oh! how exciting! Have I so far escaped bombs and submarines only to die now in the heat of the American plains from exposure to the overenthusiastic kindheartedness of the crowds?”

“I see that you have never heard of the casualty list of foreign guests we have fêted in America. We hastened Rachel's death, but that, I think, has been our most conspicuous social crime. Many others besides your great tragedian have been victims. Not long ago an English lady was so much entertained and féted and called upon to make so many speeches in this country, that she died almost immediately after landing in England. In the case of our own countrywomen, we raise a monument to them, when their death is due to our exaggerated sense of sociability. Last year such a monument was erected in Los Angeles to the memory of a young suffragist who died suddenly from overwork during a lecture tour in California. So please beware, and remember my warning.”

“Why!” I exclaimed, “you are certainly tempting me to become an American citizen, for then I should really have a chance of obtaining my statue, with the inscription, ‘She talked herself to the grave,’ raised in one of your squares filled with their lovely flowers and merry little squirrels!”

In the meantime, before setting out on our tour, 112 friends frequently took us out motoring, and thus we had the pleasure of admiring the country about Washington.

The Potomac Falls are a beautiful sight, and we were highly interested in seeing the river, having once heard the story of some British ambassador who slightingly remarked that he could throw a shilling across the Potomac.

“Oh! That's an easy task,” answered a witty American, “compared with what Washington did in throwing a sovereign across the Atlantic.”

About this time we received a proposal to write a book of our impressions of the United States.

That sounded very interesting, and we went out for advice about how to make a contract in America.

We met our friend Jacques de Neuflize, the representative of the Bank of France in New York, who was in Washington for the day and who should know something about big contracts.

“By all means,” was his answer, “make a verbal contract. You can rely and sleep on the word of an American. On the contrary, if you make a written agreement, it is up to you to find out what is written in it; this is fairly easy if you can read, but to find out what it means is a more difficult proposition for an unsophisticated French intelligence.”

Having said this, our friend could not resist the 113 temptation of delivering a lecture on this subject.

“You see, in France as in America there are, of course, honest and dishonest people. Dishonest people are dishonest in both countries. But honesty is based on conventions, and the conventions may be different. In France a verbal contract is always more or less tentative. In America it is binding. A written agreement in America is executed literally without regard to previous conversations; in France it is executed faithfully, but in accordance with the ‘spirit of the contract,’ which means that due regard is given to the original intentions of the parties, even if some sentence has slipped in the redaction of the contract unnoticed to one of the parties.

“This is what has brought about the curious situation that, between two countries where certainly the standards of honesty are of the highest, there have been some

misunderstandings on business transactions, due only to this fact, that the American and the Frenchman did not understand what the other meant."

Not having had an opportunity of going out for a walk since we landed on American soil, we decided to stroll out together unaccompanied one evening after dinner.

It was a clear, beautiful night, and our steps led us to Washington's monument, white in the bright light of a full moon. It was visible all over 114 the city, and to us it seemed like the symbol of Washington's pure soul protecting the capital of the great nation which owed its birth to his inspired and patriotic genius.

This obelisk is the loftiest achievement of masonry in the world, and one feels a pigmy indeed when standing at the base, towering as it does to a height of 555 feet.

We walked all around its square base, guarded by a man in a dark blue uniform. Two other tourists, American soldiers, questioned the guardian with:

"Well, what are you doing here?"

And the man answered:

"Why, I'm on guard!"

"Do you mean to say that you are here to guard this thing?" The soldier indicated the monument in amazement as if any one would ever think of walking off with it hidden in his pocket.

"But I guard many other things besides," indignantly replied the man, and with a wide sweep of the arm he indicated the grass, the benches, and the few wild flowers trying hard to blossom.

The guardian then came up to us, visibly experiencing the feeling of a host receiving all visitors coming to admire this unique monument. He said:

“Good evening, ladies. It is a beautiful night. From what State are you? I ask you this because forty States have given memorial stones which are 115 set into the monument. If you care to come back in the daytime I will show them to you.”

“We are not from the United States. We are French and have just arrived from Paris.”

At these words the man took off his cap in the most dignified manner and saluted us with a sort of reverence.

“Then you belong to a country that we love and admire, ladies. Honor to France and to its heroes!”

“Your own country is a great one, too,” we answered. “And your boys are doing splendidly over there. They fight like lions, and the French adore the Americans.”

Washington is filled with darkies, and we became extremely interested in the negro question.

Life is specially hard for the mulattos. When they are not jet-black, the negroes reject them as not being of themselves, and the white people cannot bear contact with them if there be just a speck of black on the nails. No one wants them, and they can marry only among mulattos. I can imagine how difficult it must be for a woman to choose the right shade of husband, one whose color will just match hers. Mulattos, even those of the lightest cream-coffee complexion, are incorporated in negro regiments and are never allowed to enter the white ones.

“Some of these laws,” a lady said to me at a 116 luncheon-party in Washington, “must seem very unfair to you, and I know that in France you have no racial prejudices, but you

must understand that the negro problem is one of the most complicated ones in America as the black race increases in about the same proportion as do rabbits in Europe. In the South the darkies have their own street-cars, their churches, and their special movies. In these parts of the country you find much less mixing up of whites and blacks than here. I am a Southerner myself, and my feelings toward them are complex. I loathe them as a race and they are physically repulsive to me, and yet there are few human beings I love as well as my old colored nurse who brought me up, and I am glad even to this very day when she puts her arms around my neck and kisses and hugs me in her own dear motherly way."

A handsome lady at the opposite side of the table, hearing that we were talking about the South joined in the conversation.

"I am a Southerner, too, and I have always had negro servants around me. They are loyal, but so terribly childish that you never know what mischief they will get into next. This winter my old cook fell ill while I was in South Carolina, and I had to take an extra colored cook for a few days. The day after her arrival she sent up to the dining-room the most elaborate and extravagant-looking 117 pâté de foie gras, with the strangest looking ornaments on the pastry. I was so curious that after luncheon I went down to see the new cook and ask her how she had achieved such a result. 'Why, Sally, what did you use for decorating the pâté?' Sally looked down nervously like a scolded child. and to my amazement I saw she was going to burst out crying. I insisted this time more pressingly. And Sally with big tears on her eyelashes and a sob in her voice, said, 'S'cuse me, ma'am, but I took my false teeth.'"

This reminded me of the Hindu servant who was caught putting the finishing touches to his most excellent toast by buttering it with a tooth brush, to the horror of his English mistress.

We were launched on the subject of negro stories, and my sister and I were very much interested as all this was perfectly novel to us. All the people in that part of America seem to have darkies as servants.

Another lady after luncheon told us that her mother had been for many years an invalid, and that her only pleasure was receiving visitors. One winter she was laid up for months with severe bronchitis and could see no one. But each evening she read with the greatest interest the names of the people who had called in the afternoon. Her devoted colored butler, having noticed this and wanting to please his mistress, gathered some old visiting-cards, 118 and presented them on the tray so as to multiply the number of calls. Among them were those of several friends long since dead, and the old lady, not wanting to hurt the colored man's feelings, conscientiously read them every day without ever betraying her intense amusement.

“Have you noticed the new fashion that is spreading with a ‘furore’ amongst the negro women?” asked a bright and charming young girl in our party. “As you all know, white women are crazy to have their hair frizzed up and kinked like darkies, by the electric ‘everlasting waver.’ Whereas the poor darkies are now trying to get their hair straightened out flat and unkinked so as to look more like white people. It is absurdly pathetic, and the clever woman who has invented the ‘unkinking’ for the blacks is making just as big a fortune as the man who thought of frizzing up the whites!”

We were much impressed in D. C. by the sight of so many women driving their own motor-cars. Here it is an achievement which they seem to consider the finishing touch of a good education. Before the war no women in France drove cars, but so many customs are changing on the old Continent, that I imagine we will very soon adopt this one when the war is over.

But shall we also adopt with this driving craze, 119 the fashion of sitting at the wheel bare-headed, as I see so many women doing in Rock Creek Park, or in Fairmont Park in

Philadelphia. They are pretty to look at, and their hair is held in by a net which keeps it tidy. Neatness is one of the characteristics of the American women.

But what can be their reason for driving with only a net on their heads. Is it a war sacrifice to economize on hats and buy Liberty Bonds, or is it done for toning up the hair, or does it come perhaps from the simple desire to feel the cool breeze fan their foreheads? It is still a mystery to me.

In order that our acquaintance with all things American might lack nothing in completeness, one of our Washingtonian cousins took us to a drug-store to introduce us to the ice-cream soda fountain.

The simple fact of going to the druggist's to find an enjoyable drink threw a new light upon possibilities of such shops. For until that day we had supposed, in old world fashion, that only liquids possessing a more or less beneficient action on the health were to be found there.

This once more proved to us that Americans know better than others how to sugar the pill, a gift which certainly contributes to make this planet a more enjoyable place to live upon.

Customers climb upon high chairs round a counter and so, once more an inch or two nearer 120 to heaven, we enjoyed the blissful beverage—in the hot American weather a real drink for the gods.

We were glad to have been taken to a place considered “most proper,” where we had found a delightfully refreshing drink in a dry State.

Prohibition is a serious problem, which the druggists, better than others, may know how to solve in the States. I was told that one of them had advertized in one of the Prohibition States a remarkable “tonic” wine named “Peruna.” The people, deprived of cocktails and

other such “pick-me-ups,” felt greatly in need of something strengthening to help them to get over their physical and moral depression.

“Peruna” was the greatest success and seemed truly to possess the essential properties of an alcoholic drink, and might safely be approved by all. Even the most hardened prohibitionists ecstatically absorbed any number of bottles of this chemical product that advantageously replaced the strongest of the cocktails.

But, alas, for the prohibitionists! It was later discovered that “Peruna” owed all its charm to its being a special preparation containing ninety per cent. of alcohol.

And more strongly still did we realize the bond of friendship between our two countries when we 121 made a picnic with Miss Margaret Wilson, youngest daughter of the President of the United States. We set out in two of the White House motor-cars together with some of the President's intimate friends. As is well known President Wilson is surrounded by a few such chosen friends, and his daughter also seems to enjoy their company.

Our party was a very merry one, and Miss Wilson's lively and charming disposition contributed very largely to enlivening the dinner, which we took under some beautiful old trees, and very comfortably seated on the cushions of the White House motor-cars.

Before starting on our mission we visited the offices of the French High Commissionner in Columbia Road. Like the Broadway branch office in New York it is a veritable bee-hive where much wonderful work is carried out. One thousand, five hundred people are under the direct supervision of the “Haut Commissaire.”

Monsieur André Tardieu is to-day one of the most promising political men in France, and his organization in America brought to the fore all his extraordinary gifts of energy, adaptibility, clearmindedness, and practical efficiency. He is also endowed with remarkable physical endurance, which enables him to work easily fifteen hours a day.

The entire responsibility of the French Government's 122 war purchases in the United States, rested on his shoulders, and his representatives were in intimate and close relationship with the various war departments of the American Government.

During Monsieur Tardieu's absence Columbia Road was under the direction of the general delegate, Monsieur de Billy, who was most kind, and extended to us the support of the French Government. In this way we were making our tour under the very best auspices.

On the eve of our departure Mr. Creel told us that if we cared to go to his office the next morning, we should have the opportunity of meeting Mrs. Pankhurst, who had an appointment with him. We were extremely interested at the idea of seeing this well-known woman, who has certainly acquired a world-wide reputation, and we did not fail to keep the engagement at Jackson Place.

Truly we were never more astonished than when we saw Mrs. Pankhurst enter the room. I had imagined that the instigator of those extreme measures of violence employed by certain of the suffragists—such as throwing flaming chairs from a theater box upon the people below, or fighting with the police like desperadoes—would be a “tower-of-strength” type of womanhood.

Whereas Mrs. Pankhurst appeared to be a small, refined, middle-aged woman, with delicate features, clear and sweet blue eyes, a low, subdued, and well-modulated 123 voice. She was very elegantly attired, with an evident desire to produce a distinctly favorable effect on those who cross her path. There was in her whole attitude a certain reserve even verging on timidity. Timidity! This was certainly the most unexpected feminine quality I had ever dreamed of finding in Mrs. Pankhurst. It is true that celebrities are often a mass of contradictions between their inner selves and their outward appearances.

Before going any further I want here to express my admiration for the way in which Mr. Creel organized our tour for us. To each town through which we traveled, orders were wired from Washington to the different societies or government agents in whose charge we were and not once during our long trip did we experience the feeling that anything for our comfort had been neglected.

The Committee on Public Information attended most kindly and with the greatest consideration to our smallest wishes such as ordering our apartments beforehand, and so making our traveling as easy a matter as possible.

Mr. Creel has sometimes been “accused” of being a poet, but as a French woman and, moreover, a Parisian, I cannot help deeming that an artistic temperament is the greatest gift God can bestow on a human being. Besides, the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information is not only an 124 artist, but he is also a creator of practical realization, and he proved it by the efficiency with which he organized this new branch of the American Government, which rendered great service during the war.

It was on the morning of June 21 that we took the train for Harrisburg, where we spent only two days. We much admired the Susquehanna River, of which we had a lovely view from the Civic Club House where we stayed.

There, too, I had the satisfaction of beating my own record. Truly I am becoming very American! I was asked to speak nine times in twenty-four hours.

This was the program of my work:

1. Red Cross Auxiliary

2. Pipe and Pipe bending works

3. Pomeray and Stewart Shop

4. Red Cross Class

5. Pine Street Church

6. Central Iron Steel Co.

7. Finishing Mill Works

8. Blough Manufactory Company, Textile Workers

9. Civic Club House

My sister hoped this would be my only record, for otherwise she feared my skeleton alone would return to Europe.

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We had gathered the curious impression from what some Americans had told us about Pittsburgh that it was an ugly city, very black and fearfully smoky. We were beginning to think that colored people alone would be able to inhabit it or those not minding to be taken for such after half an hour's walk through the city. Now that we have been there I can affirm that we are still of the white race, and belonged to it all through our stay in Pittsburgh.

The town contains some most attractive shops, with dresses of the very latest fashions in their windows. American women dress with so much taste and always look so very up-to-date that it is a real pleasure to watch them going about. They all seem attractive, and have an inborn elegance that Paris itself would be proud to acknowledge as its own.

We stayed with some very charming cousins of ours, who live in a pretty house outside the city, and there we never had to suffer the inconvenience of soot from the factories.

One of the great attractions of Pittsburgh is to drive in the evening on the hill that dominates the city and get a view of “Hell with the lid off,” as that place has been called. It certainly is one of the most remarkable impressions I have experienced, to see those many blast-furnaces belching forth flashes of fire that illuminate the whole city. 126 They look like giant fire-works on a Fourth of July; the town seems to be in full festivity—and what a feast!!!

In contemplating this gorgeous fairy scene, it seemed to me that I could somewhat understand for the first time in my life, the Roman Emperor Nero, who set fire to Rome for the beauty of the spectacle. But unlike Nero, I had no lute to play upon while contemplating the scene, and my sister had left her flute at home. Had I omitted to say that she plays this instrument?

In the day time the town does not present the same artistic attraction, but it is splendid in its ugliness, it is, if I may use the word, the most colossal sight I have ever seen. I never thought it possible for one single town to contain such a number of factory chimneys. I am told they succeed each other without intermission along the river for 48 miles.

I spoke three consecutive mornings at the Westinghouse factories, encouraging the men to work harder if possible, and endeavoring to make them realize that their war work was as important as if they were in France fighting in the trenches. Truly if these men were to stop making munitions, their own brothers and sons would get killed without even having the chance to defend themselves against a well-armed enemy.

The workmen were so responsive and patriotic 127 and, although so far away from the battle-fields, I found them most eager to hear what was going on over there, where their sons, brothers, and friends were fighting for the right cause. The men of the Westinghouse factories had all bought Liberty Bonds in the last drive, and they certainly won my admiration.

These meetings were generally held out-of-doors, and my audiences varied from several hundred to seven and eight thousand men and women.

I shall always remember one man, a workman, who came up with many others to shake hands with me when the talk was over. Tears were streaming down his weather-beaten face, and he took my hands in his two big ones, and his whole heart was in the grip he gave me. His emotion was such he could hardly speak.

“God bless you, my dear little lady,” he murmured, “and God bless your brave country.” And with bent head he walked away.

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CHAPTER XII “PROPER” AMERICA

WHEN we sailed for the United States we thought that we were going to the land of liberty, where its happy people could quietly enjoy life and do just as they chose. I began to wonder whether this was not an illusion when, there in free America, I read on the table in our room, in one of the best hotels in the Middle West:

“The X—Hotel calls your attention to the following fifth rule: ‘It is customary to have the door open at least six inches when entertaining some one of the opposite sex in private rooms.’”

How fearfully moral! I suggest that if the X—Hotel wishes its guests strictly to comply with this rule, a yard measure be attached to the door to insure the correct measurement.

Our great French writer of the nineteenth century, Balzac, says in one of his novels entitled “La Peau de Chagrin,” that liberty gives birth to anarchy, anarchy leads to despotism, and that despotism brings back to liberty.

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“Millions of men,” exclaims one of his heroes, “have perished without being able to bring about the triumph of any of these systems. Might we not admit that human thought perpetually evolves in circles. When mankind believes it has progressed, it has but turned toward another pole.”

America in many respects is to-day steering for her moral pole toward despotism. Although a democracy, this country is going through a phase of imperialism such as few other nations have been able to attain.

This crisis is most likely due to the state of war, and it will probably be followed by a phase of reaction. But the United States such as I have known them in 1918 are governed by a President, dictator or imperator, who himself is governed by a power above him called Public Opinion, controlled partly by his own agents.

Personally, I have always held the opinion that the best form of government—thereby I mean the one that gives the best results—for periods of unrest, which so far seem to be the normal condition of most countries, is that of a monarchy administered by a clever, though broad-minded, tyrant. Here I am using the word monarchy in its broadest sense, the one that a French philosopher gave to it when he declared that there existed three forms of government—the monarchy or the state ruled by one man; the oligarchy, ruled by several; 130 and anarchy or the result of the state ruled by the masses. In 1918, America, England, and France, were proving once more that a nation rises to its maximum of strength when its whole power lies virtually in the hands of an efficient, clear-minded, and energetic man, such as are President Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau.

As I wrote before, America was then undergoing a period of moral despotism, which, I believe, will bring remarkable results to the country and help to carry it to the zenith of its power.

Although I have mentioned several times in this book my favorable opinion towards cocktails and my finding them personally of highly satisfactory effect, yet I do believe that the suppression of alcoholism in the United States will help in generations to come to build up far stronger, far healthier, and far more beautiful physiques than any other race on this planet has known.

One of our biggest wine merchants in Bordeaux was lately interviewed by American officials on this subject:

“True, the wine trade,” said the Frenchman, “will suffer considerably when America goes dry, yet when alcoholism has been eradicated from your country, no other nation will be able to compete with you.”

I also remember an American telling me that the States in the Union which have voted prohibition 131 have already risen in industrial and commercial production far beyond the others.

One of the ideals that Americans seem to have most at heart is that of improving their race by every means. And it is apparently with this object that they are endeavoring to stamp out alcoholism and the absorption of all drugs of the nature of stimulants.

I heard, although I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement, that Californians were seriously investigating the question of suppressing coffee and even tea as producing a baneful influence on the nerves. This may possibly be an exaggeration. Again I remember having more than once been requested to enlist as a propagandist against the “poisonous influence” of nicotine. But I was forced to reply that I feel no inclination toward the suppression of the pleasures of this world.

After one of my lectures in Indianapolis a lady drew me mysteriously into a corner, declaring that she had a communication to make of the utmost importance. One may imagine my astonishment when she drew out from the depths of her bag a pamphlet

entitled “A Puff of Smoke,” which she thrust into my hands, hoping therewith to convert me and to make me renounce those highly dangerous and pernicious cigarettes, capable of bringing to pass all the disasters under the sun. I found out afterward, when I had perused the contents of 132 this little book, that the “Puff of Smoke” was a real league with headquarters in Chicago.

Another lady one day remarked to me while I was traveling in Montana that cigarettes were forbidden in that state, though cigars and pipes were allowed. And she added to my amazement:

“When I send ready-made packages to the boys who are fighting in France, I carefully take out beforehand the tobacco they contain.” Poor boys!

This poor lady certainly had not the remotest idea of the soldier's life in the trenches, when for hours, days, months in the long winter time, he has to remain waiting and watching in the mud, the wet, and the cold.

If I appear to be criticizing “Proper America,” yet I do believe that the whole nation is fundamentally right in trying to suppress any drug that weakens the organism; and this war has certainly proved the value of physical resistance.

Some medical authorities hold the theory that the decline of nations is due largely to the poor state of health of a great percentage of the persons in a country. They have tried to prove that the decline of the Greek civilization could be traced to the result of malaria, which the Persians brought into the country during the Median Wars. This fever is also supposed to have been carried by the Greeks to Italy, and to have played a great part in the downfall of the Roman empire.

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So the experiences of the past are lessons for the future, and America, I suppose, is but struggling for her life when she tries to protect her people against the dangers of Europe

or the Far East. But it all depends on the articles that fall under the prohibition laws. The suppression of wine, opium, cocaine, tobacco, may make the country healthier, but what will become of great America, if she is ever tempted to prohibit kissing? The following humorous article, published by a Seattle paper, is an indication of the present rather puritanical tendency prevailing all through the Union.

REGULATING THE KISS

New York is so busy with other matters that it is a marvel that its people have any time for war. At Coney Island it has been made unlawful to kiss. Four persons were arrested for this high crime last Sunday and twelve people were warned. The fellow who stands at the front door of his home and kisses his wife good-by for the day, may not be back for several days if the policeman on the beat sees him. Out in the parks the police have acquired the habit of watching couples who exhibit any tendency toward kissing, waiting for the crime to be committed. If the couple hold hands it is regarded as probable that an arrest may soon be made. The ban, of course, is entirely in the nature of a sanitary regulation.

In New York proper, it appears, the health department is willing to permit a variety of denatured kiss. Its advice to the public is not to kiss “except through a handkerchief.” But the whole business is confusing. A Coney Island couple, 134 who thought the metropolitan health board's advice was good, and were trying to employ a bandana, got thirty days. No doubt any couple that would sit in a public park and deliberately try to kiss through a handkerchief deserves thirty days. However we cannot understand what all this has to do with the winning the war. New York appears to be perfectly willing to go without wheat bread to whale the Hun, but when it comes to kisses, it is necessary to make it a matter of police regulation.

When the Spanish influenza spread like an epidemic over the world, I remember reading the following advice printed on the windows of a tram-car in Washington:

“Cover your mouth, smother your cough, don't sneeze, no kissing allowed.”

I may be unobservant, but I have never yet seen any creatures so homeless as having nowhere else to kiss in but a tram-car. Have you?

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CHAPTER XIII IN THE MIDDLE WEST

AMERICANS have very original ideas about their town-buildings, and as they have had to construct a great number during the past fifty years, they have had several generations of engineers who have devised and perfected the best plans of laying out a city according to all the latest principles of hygiene.

So far as I have been able to judge during our rapid traveling, I think that Americans in the Middle West begin by building a town, to the center of which they confine all smoke, noise, firemen, business, factories, and street-cars. Then around this town they build another one, in which are their dwelling-houses, wives, children, friends, pet animals, and there they return every night.

The central town is as noisy, as ugly, as inharmonious, as intensive in its traffic, as the surrounding one is beautiful, quiet, peaceful, full of flowers, green lawns, picturesque mansions, and lovely children.

Some papers in speaking about my speeches mentioned the fact that I had the “quaintest accent,” 136 and I discovered that by that they meant the “English accent.” It is too delightful for words, for I expected that a “quaint accent” would at least be a French one.

“I know a celebrated singer in this country,” said a friend to me, “who, although of Polish origin, was born and lived all her life in America. Her voice was wonderful, but she failed at first to win public favor. “Try and sing with a Polish accent,” said her singing master. So she studied very hard to change her pronunciation, her “Th's” and her “O's,” and she

won tremendous success by simulating the foreigner. When after many years she again met her former master, she addressed him with a frightfully strong Polish accent. Putting his hands over his ears he cried: “Stop it, stop it; it's no good with me, for I taught you the trick!”

The Middle West reminded me of my own beloved country; the landscape is very like certain parts of France, and this made it very dear to us.

In Dayton, I spoke twice at the Cash Register Factory, which was manufacturing great quantities of Liberty motors for aëroplanes. After having spent a night in President Patterson's home, where we were allotted a wonderful room with twelve windows looking upon the gardens, we were asked to attend a meeting held by our host in his factory.

Many hundreds of workmen and head employees were present at the lecture. The subject of the talk was profit-sharing, and Mr. Patterson not only developed his theme very cleverly, but in turns called upon several of his employees to explain the benefits that could in this way be reaped, both by the capitalists and the workmen, and to give their personal appreciation of the question.

An immense poster was placarded on the platform in full view of the audience with the following thirty suggestions:

Benefits of Being a Profit-Sharer

1. Stops waste.

2. Makes you think.

3. Develops character.

4. Increases your loyalty.

5. Stirs ambition within you.

6. Gives you more initiative.

7. Makes you part of the company.

8. Gives you more responsibility.

9. Pays you more for working more.

10. Makes you dissatisfied to stand still.

11. Gives you more incentive to co-operate.

12. Brings nearer the real brotherhood of man.

13. Makes an inspector out of each profit-sharer.

14. Creates more persistency in your daily work.

15. Increases a man's confidence and self-respect.

16. Gives you more personal interest in your work.

17. Makes your wife more interested in the company.

18. Gives you the helpful association of strong men.

19. Gives you greater incentive to stay on your job.

20. Changes the critical attitude of some outsiders.

21. Makes you more free to offer helpful criticisms.

22. Is the connecting link between Capital and Labor.

23. Enables you to get projects from the company's capital.

24. Enables you to share in the company's opportunities.

25. Makes you a better workman and more useful citizen.

26. Gives you more reason to put your heart in your work.

27. Makes company loss your loss, and company's gain your gain.

28. Enables you to share in the democracy of a big organization.

29. Creates contentment with things company considers necessary.

30. Enables you to share company's good will, which is more than wages.

Honest effort and capital are both necessary to success.

I do not doubt that when profit-sharing has been made practical of application in most factories, the great problem of capital and labor will have been solved, because it will create a bond between them,—and, I believe, the only bond that can exist between these two antagonistic groups of humanity,—that of a common interest.

But it is true that in the present state of conditions the system of profit-sharing cannot be financially applied to all factories, as, naturally, it cannot be undertaken except by those that are particularly prosperous and offer a stability and a steady growth in their affairs. I wonder how the workmen would like to share the losses.

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We were incessantly traveling at meteor-like pace. As I wrote to my mother:

Our life is a strenuous one, and my thoughts are entirely given up to two ideas: the cause, the work, talking to thousands of people to help them to understand the war and fan their patriotism.

And, secondly, trying to snatch every moment possible for rest and keeping fit for the many months' work ahead of me.

I have just been counting that in six days I talked to over thirty thousand people of all classes and distinctions. The number of my speeches varies from five to six a day.

In this way the message spreads like oil on the ocean. And audiences in America are certainly the most responsive I have ever found.

We met so many people every day, that both my sister and myself had the greatest difficulty not only in remembering, but also in catching names. Introductions are made here as in France. The mistress of the house will say:

“Mrs. Smith, allow me to introduce to you Mr. Brown.”

But what ensues is not quite as it is at home. Mrs. Smith and Mr. Brown shake hands vigorously, or rather with a decidedly muscular expression of sincerity, and Mrs. Smith pronounces the stereo-typed phrase, “Very glad to meet you, Mr. Brown.” And Mr. Brown declares as if they were performing a duet, “Very glad to meet you, Mrs. Smith.”

Unfortunately I have a very bad ear for foreign 140 names, and I never felt sure enough of myself to get beyond, “Delighted to see you.” Invariably the name escaped me.

My sister suffers from the same defect as I. One day, however, I was perfectly astounded to hear her say:

“So glad to meet you, Mr. Springstrait-Getup.”

And she rang out the Springstrait-Getup with a triumphant look at me. I felt very small indeed. (Mr. S—G—was the president of some works we had visited.) When we got back to the hotel I congratulated her.

“What progress you are making, dear: were you not afraid of catching the queer name wrong?”

She eyed me maliciously.

“I knew you would be astounded at my cleverness, but now I'll confess the name was written up on the office door.”

On the other hand I suppose many Americans who have never been abroad would be greatly amused if they witnessed our introductions in France.

“Allow me to introduce to you Monsieur de T—, Vicomtesse de N—.”

Monsieur de T—would bend over the lady's hand and kiss it.

“Madame, I lay my homage at your feet.”

This is the height of politeness, as many Frenchmen 141 do not kiss a lady's hand, but they always show this—to foreigners—exaggerated deferential attitude toward women in society. Even a little boy of four years old in France, if he is brought up in the right tradition of polished manners, will always kiss a lady's hand, so that when he grows up this habit has become second nature. I have known some men who even kiss their mother's hand in deferential greeting. Girls, from their childhood until the day of their marriage, make a curtsey to the married women whom they meet in society, not a mere bob, but a real court curtsey for which they have been specially trained.

One evening at a dinner-party in Cincinnati I expressed my admiration of the intelligence of the average American, which is certainly very superior to that of similar classes in Europe.

“Do you know,” answered a doctor, next to whom I was sitting, “that in lower Kentucky there are three million people who cannot read or write, and who speak the English of Shakespeare's time?”

“I am very astonished to hear this,” I answered. “I thought that education was compulsory in America.”

“It is,” explained the doctor, “but not in all the States. In the South, for instance, the percentage of illiterate people runs very high on account of the colored race.”

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“I think,” he added, “that you will be interested to hear some of the answers that a soldier gave me the other day in Camp X—, where I was lecturing and doing some Y.M.C.A. work. As you know, the ignorance of some of the enlisted men is sometimes amazing.

“The question asked by me was: “‘Who is commander-in-chief of the American military forces in France?’

“A soldier raised his hand with a ready answer.

“‘I know,’ he said. ‘It's Wilson.’

“After this enlightening reply, I questioned him again.

”‘Are we fighting with the Italians or against them?’

“‘Against them.’

"'When you get to France,' I asked, 'are you sure that you will be glad to give a thrashing to the Italians?'

"'I sure will thrash all those I am told to, and will be right glad to do it.'

"And the soldier emphasized his words with such vigor that there was no denying he had in him the stuff that makes a good fighter, although he was so lamentably lacking in knowledge of the politics of the world."

One of our greatest surprises in the United States was finding how much the young generation of the 143 country loves to get a dipping in water. Americans are an amphibious race. Swimming, diving, and plunging, come to them instinctively. Never in my whole life have I met so many people in bathing costumes. It is almost a summer uniform —and truly a very becoming one. Almost invariably the men wear short black tights, which display their supple and muscular bodies to the greatest advantage.

In France we rarely swim except at the sea-side, whereas here you almost fall into a crowded swimming-pool at every step you take, in the public parks, at country-clubs, and very often in hotels and in private houses. In many private tanks in the West the water is heated in winter so that it becomes a delightful bath in the open air.

I am often tempted into believing that the Americans of to-day, and specially the "Pacific Coasters," are reincarnated egos of the ancient Greeks.

They have the same love of nature, of out-of-door exercises, and the same cult for the beauty of healthy physiques.

We were dining in Cincinnati one night on the terrace of the country-club, enjoying the sight of a glorious sunset that illumined the whole sky. Three to four hundred people were dining there, as I had been asked to deliver an address during the evening, and this was to be followed by a dance. 144 At the table next to ours I noticed a group of ten or twelve

young men and girls, the latter in lovely evening-gowns and looking as fresh as flowers. They mysteriously withdrew at the end of the meal, and a few minutes later the sound of merry peals of laughter and noisy splashes caught my ear. Leaning over the balustrade, I recognized the group of young people, now in bathing suits, disporting themselves in the swimming-pool just below the terrace and having high fun in the water.

Half an hour later they reappeared once more in their evening clothes, ready for the dance, the girls looking lovelier than ever owing to the brisk exercise they had taken. This proved to me that our European doctors are a trifle timorous in affirming that you will probably die of congestion if you plunge into cold water after a heavy meal.

Before going to the United States I had heard many Americans complaining of the personal way in which they were spoken of in the papers of their country. My impression on the contrary was quite the reverse; the articles that were published about our tour and ourselves were all, without any exception whatsoever, extremely courteous, even over-complimentary, and the personal touch in them invariably amused us intensely.

We were particularly delighted with one reporter in Indianapolis who gave the following account of his interview with us:

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Reporters début with Countess Trying event. Discovers she speaks English and uses an American Fountain Pen

You can't always tell. Armed with a dozen or more bromidic French sentences picked up a long time ago in a remote college, a reporter for “The Times” walked with fear and trembling into the Severin Hotel this morning to interview a countess. A regular, dyed-in-the-silk countess.

First of all the correct pronunciation of her name had to be acquired. Printed, her name reads Comtesse Madeleine de Bryas. Says the clerk, “Her name is Dee Bry-us,”—just like that.

Next, what does one call a countess to her face. Is it “your grace” or “your worship” or “your excellency,” or what is it? The reporter could not remember to save his neck. Never had seen a countess before, to say nothing of talking to one.

“I'll just call her countess and take my chances,” said the newspaper man.

Golden-haired vision appears

Over the telephone a date was made. Up went the reporter. On the eleventh floor of the Severin in the northeast corner is a fine little suite. Walking through the plush the reporter found a seat. Stumbled only once. Into the room came a vision, golden-haired and smiling. The reporter is in Class IV, but was rattled. He had seen an old-fashioned ink-well on an escritoire or writing-desk they call it in the United States.

“Ha, seventeenth century atmosphere,” thought the reporter, spying a quill pen in the ink-well.

The vision with the golden hair sat down, still smiling.

“Il fait trés chaud,” said the reporter, meaning, “It is mighty hot.” Had to say something quickly, and he remembered that.

The vision smiled, and said in the finest possible English, “Yes, it is warm.”

There was perhaps five minutes of talk. Reporter arose to go. The vision said:

“Would n't you like to see the countess before you go? She'll be dressed in a minute.”

Not her maid, only a sister

“Oh boy, have I been talking to the maid or something, all this time?”

Out came another vision if not more so. Her hair was golden, too.

They looked alike. No wonder; they are sisters. The reporter had been talking to Mlle. de Bryas, who, by the way, pronounces her name as follows, “Duh Breeah.” Not that she insists; only that is correct.

The countess shook hands. Not up in the air like she was reaching for something, but Indiana fashion, just like she was glad to see you.

The countess speaks in factories, in theaters—everywhere. She will go to the coast before returning to France. She does not bother with a maid. Her sister is her companion and secretary. Early in the war the countess caught the idea of war service. She applied herself at once and has worked constantly since. Her love of France and America is reward enough, she says.

The countess and her sister had an engagement. Before the reporter left he could not resist speaking of the quill.

“Do you write with that?” he asked.

“Goodness, no,” the countess replied. “I write with this.” 147 She jerked from somewhere a perfectly good American fountain pen.

The publicity for our tour was directly controlled from Washington by the Committee on Public Information, which sent on photographs and a few notes of information to the various towns to which we were scheduled to go. Our arrival was always announced in the

local papers a few days before we made our appearance, and we generally wired to the authorities the time of our arrival.

Then we would buy the papers on the train, and read what the local authorities had planned out for us. The number of speeches I was intended to deliver always appalled me, and reading what I had to do in itself made me collapse. Each town seemed to think it was the only one I was to speak in, and therefore prepared as huge a program as the one I had just filled in the cities I had previously visited, and as the one I knew in all certainty was awaiting me to be gone through at my next stopping-place on the route.

We were generally greeted on the platform by a delegation of the city authorities. This was always done so heartily that we never had the impression of being in a foreign land. We felt that we were of them, and after the formal introduction considered them as old friends. In fact the only sad point in the journey was having to part from 148 them just as we were getting to know them and becoming true friends.

However, I sincerely think that at first sight we puzzled and disappointed many of those charming people who greeted us at the stations of the different cities we went to, and this is why: French women have the reputation of being small and dark, and so that was the type looked for on the arrival of the train. Therefore, when two tall and fair-haired sisters descended from the Pullman car, a puzzled expression was clearly visible on the faces of the welcoming group on the platform.

Afterwards we had to explain that America was the cause for this “error of type,” our mother being a tall and blond American of English descent.

“Why, you are only a girl!” several ladies remarked to me, sometimes almost with a sigh of relief.

“But what did you expect?” I inquired.

“We really thought you were going to be an old, old lady, looking tremendously imposing, some one whom we should have to treat ceremoniously.” And they laughed over their mistake.

The vision of the French *vieille dame* flitted across my brain, the kind that wears a little bonnet and goes to church every morning at dawn. Will that ever happen to us I wonder.

Joined to the welcoming group were often several reporters and photographers, and it can easily 149 be imagined that interviews had to be granted immediately to these eager news-seekers.

The photographers also wished to publish our photographs in their papers. So to that effect we had had some photographs taken in New York. But then we found they generally preferred publishing their own particular snapshots; therefore, on coming out of the station, even after twenty-four hours of Pullman-car traveling, they would insist on taking our pictures.

We often had to pose in front of the station while the photographers, as busy as bees, were buzzing around us, making any number of suggestions to get us at our best, such as: “Raise your head; turn a little; smile; now to the right; to the left; stand sideways; not so near, please; there now, I think it will be all right this time!”

And the next day we had the joy of contemplating in the local papers two grinning old women with dark hair, quoted as having arrived in the town on a mission for the Committee on Public Information. But, strange to say, they bore our name, and stranger still, they had given an identical interview with ours! The main difference was that we are young and blond, and have not yet been accused of turning our smiles into grins of the Cheshire-Cat nature.

Notwithstanding this, the photographs were often very good, and good or bad, we always enjoyed 150 opening the papers to see what the camera had been willing to make of us.

There was never any need to ask if a State were “dry” or not;—it was very easily discovered and in this way.

“Would you like to stop at my house before dining at the country-club? And I will mix you a cocktail!”

Then this undoubtedly was a dry State!

At the country-club of such states non-alcoholic drinks only were to be found, so for this reason the forced-prohibitionists had stocked their cellars with plenty of the necessary ingredients for the making of violently strong pick-me-ups!

In the non-prohibited states we were never offered cocktails, this beverage probably being looked upon as a necessity of daily life, and so one of the easiest-provided for. And frankly we will confess that it certainly was in the “prohibited” states that we most enjoyed cocktails, and this after all is but natural, when we remember “forbidden fruit.”

This leads me to the conclusion that if ever it were my lot to govern a country, I would immediately set to work to prohibit all virtues on the principle that the people, urged by the spirit of contradiction, might the more readily attain perfection.

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CHAPTER XIV ST. LOUIS

“NOW tell me how it is that you two young women can travel from coast to coast alone, in a country unknown to you, without either a maid or a manager?”

We were asked this question by a charming American lady, who added that she herself would never have dared undertake such a trip under such conditions. can travel from coast to coast

I then explained to her that alone I should never have been able to do the journey, and that it was my sister's rôle to look after everything apart from the speech-making. She was my manager, inquiring about the trains, taking the tickets, reserving seats, telegraphing ahead to announce our arrival; keeping up an important correspondence with the different governmental organizations, with my publicity agents, with the various committees I was founding for the benefit of Miss Anne Morgan's work in the devastated areas of France.

When I was too exhausted to see the reporters myself, my sister gave the interviews; she also had to look after more material things, such as 152 having our dresses pressed out so that we might always be presentable, and getting our laundry work done, which in the circumstances was often a difficult problem. These seem to be very trivial details, but they certainly were important, as we seldom remained more than forty-eight hours in any city.

Another of the important things she had to attend to was answering the telephone, which from seven o'clock in the morning until late at night might be expected to ring at any time, and which, in fact, generally rang incessantly.

So owing to my sister's splendid help, it was possible for me to keep my thoughts entirely centered on my speeches, and to deliver from three to six a day—which is an unusual number—although we had to spend almost every other night in railway traveling in the intense American heat.

As we were traveling from town to town it was impossible for us to let our people at home know where to address our letters. Therefore we asked Morgan's bank in New York to forward our mail to the different towns we should stop at, and so we often received shoals of letters all on the same day. I remember in St. Louis receiving twelve letters from home,

among them letters from our father and mother, who were writing under the bombardment of “Grosse Bertha,” the long-range gun.

And then we learned that a shell had fallen at 153 the end of the avenue we live in, into a square where a market was being held. Our own cook had had a narrow escape as she had been buying vegetables from the very women, who, five minutes later, became the innocent victims of the Krupp gun.

Such news increased our anxiety, and from that time we were always wondering in what part of Paris the shells were exploding, and whether our parents and friends would come out of the bombardment alive. Nevertheless, we preferred to know what was really happening in our dear country, so as to be able to give direct news from “over there” to the Americans, and so bring the war still nearer to them.

The spirit was such in France that although the guns from the front could be heard from our house, our parents were most wonderfully optimistic and had the greatest faith in the final victory. But mingled with the joy of getting news from home was often the great sadness of learning of the death of many friends. In almost every letter we were told of the loss of one or several of the boys we had been brought up with, friends we had always known, and whom we never thought of having to part with so soon.

But we could not allow ourselves to get depressed, and so we tried to remember only such phrases as the following one written by my father:

“I am writing to you under the bombardment, 154 shells are falling all around us, but we are still optimistic. Paris has the smile!”

The effect those words produced upon us was magical; we felt we had no cause to doubt the issue of the war when those who were close by had such faith and moral courage. And so our parents were over there in the heat of the struggle, and we, their daughters,

struggling for the same great cause,—although only in the heat of the plains of the Middle West,—could sympathize with them as though we, too, had been there.

We were beginning to be exhausted by the hot weather, the rapid traveling, and the very crowded programs to be carried out in the various towns.

Despite the war, the trains were filled with passengers. Americans travel with amazing facility; a two days' journey is a short trip to them, and a night in a Pullman-car almost a rest, for in this way they are far from telephones, social and business friends, and offices. The inhabitants of the United States are certainly the most daring and reckless people in the world, and yet to my great astonishment they are mortally afraid of—flies. Poor, tiny, stupid flies!

“We loathe them,” an American tried to explain to me in the train. “They are responsible for the spreading of so many diseases, and besides that they are hateful, hateful, hateful!” he concluded with great energy.

To us this hatred seemed almost out of proportion. Fancy a strong, powerful Middle-Westerner in fits if a tiny, wee fly buzzes in his direction!

This reminded me of a humoristic drawing that appeared in one of our papers at the beginning of 1915. A Red Cross nurse was seen picking up her skirts, jumping in terror to a chair, and staring down at a mouse which was scrambling away over the floor.

“Oh!” said the trembling Red Cross heroine, “I've been in the battle of the Marne, but this mouse is more than my nerves can stand.”

“As you have noticed,” our traveling companion added, “all over America, the railway companies have metallic window-screens put up in the trains during hot weather, as is done in most houses, in order to keep out those terrible flies.”

The service in the Middle Western trains, as in the East, is still performed by darkies. On leaving Evansville, Indiana, we went into the dining-car. At the same moment a man from Missouri arrived in the restaurant, holding a five-dollar bill in his hand.

“I want to reserve a table,” he declared loudly. “Who's the head nigger boy?”

A darky came up to him and, with the most amusing dignity, he said in a freezing voice:

“I wish to explain that there are no nigger boys here, sir. There are only colored gentlemen.”

“Very well,” answered the Missouri man, “if there are only colored gentlemen on this train, I suppose I will have to put this back in my pocket.” He looked down at the bill he was holding ostentatiously.

“Wait a minute, sir; oh! please wait a minute,” said the darky, speaking with volubility. “I'm the head nigger boy, and all this black trash here will tell you it's true.”

On arriving in St. Louis, my sister's first pre-occupation was to see that I should not have to speak more than three times in the same day. The Committee on Public Information had also wired from Washington asking that my speeches be reduced to that number. But, alas! reduction seems an impossibility in this country where everything is made to increase and the spirit of the whole nation is progressive. And so I was introduced to the public by the chairman of the chamber of commence, a very kind-hearted and witty man, with these words:

“We have had strict orders from Washington not to let our guest speak more than three times a day, and so as we all have the reputation of being very obedient, we will not allow her to address the public oftener than five or six times in twenty-four hours.”

“I sometimes felt tempted to copy an American, who, being asked one day to make a speech, got up 157 and recited the following little piece of verse to his amazed audience:

“A wise old owl lived in an oak, The more he saw, the less he spoke, The less he spoke, the more he heard, Now I shall be like that wise old bird.”

Then very coolly he sat down again. I am quite convinced that Americans are the greatest lovers of speeches I have ever known; no other race in the whole world can equal them in their capacity for listening to a talker. It has been said that a Frenchman, when drunk, makes love, an Englishman fights, a German sings, but that a true American will never hesitate to make speeches. Assuredly there is profound psychology in this statement.

St. Louis is one of the principal German cities in the States, therefore Allied propaganda was greatly needed, above all as the Germans living there are very wealthy, and occupy the first positions in the city. We were shown the German quarter as being one of the attractive sights, and we admired the beautiful houses separated by green lawns; they were distinctive evidence that the inhabitants had been successful in their business enterprises.

The German question was a very difficult and complex problem to solve, and tact and intelligence 158 were needed to make the German-Americans enter the conflict against their own race. The number living in America is very great, and it is easy to see why the country did not sooner enter into the war, for it must be remembered that many Germans living in the States had members of their family in Europe fighting against the Allies.

Therefore it required a special education of the masses to make them realize that it was not their own people, those of their own blood, that they were to fight, but German militarism—that powerful organization that was spreading death and barbarity over the face of the whole earth.

The German propaganda for many years past had been so wonderfully carried out by German agents that it was often thought in the United States that German art, German kultur, German philosophy, in fact, all that was German, was far superior to any other kind, and that Germany was the superior European country. Considering this, one can understand what a difficult task it was for any government to destroy an ideal that had been brought about by years of such active propaganda. In a conversation on this subject I remember saying to an American:

“The German-Americans seem to be very patriotic if we can judge them by their actions.”

“Certainly they try to prove their patriotism,” was the reply, “by subscribing to the Liberty Loans 159 and giving large sums to the governmental organizations such as the Red Cross and the War Saving Stamps.”

“But are they sincere?” was our next question.

“The first generation established in this country,” answered my informer, “generally emigrated to avoid military service in his own land. And most of them are willing, even glad to fight for the destruction of German militarism.”

“Are those of succeeding generations as eager to fight against the *Vaterland* of their parents, as those of the first?” I asked again.

“I do not think so, and this is why. The following generations, having made large fortunes, cross the Atlantic to visit the Old Continent. They naturally feel attracted to the land of their fathers, and visit it with filial feelings. There they are often received by the notabilities of the country, even by the kaiser himself, and naturally return with the satisfaction that such a reception could not fail to have produced. But on the whole they are all accomplishing their duty and backing up the Government.”

So it may be concluded that the unity that reigned in the States during the war was worthy of the greatest admiration. For the nation was like one single man behind the President, ready to support him to the end. We speak in France with pride of our “Union Sacrée,” but the unity in 160 America was, if possible, still greater, and the country derives its tremendous power from that fact.

I spoke in several war factories during my short stay in St. Louis, and found the working class very responsive and patriotic. In one of them, which was almost exclusively composed of women, I was told that they had gone on strike the week before for higher wages. I was introduced to them by Mr. X—, who made a charming speech, which had the most successful effect.

“Who has subscribed to the Liberty Loan?” asked the speaker. “All those who have done so are asked to hold up their hands.”

And every arm was raised with enthusiasm.

“Who has subscribed to the Red Cross?” was the next question.

At least three-quarters of the hands were waving in the air.

“Now I would like those who have husbands, brothers, sweethearts, in the army to raise their hands.”

Many arms were lifted, and many eyes filled with tears.

“This is going to be my last question,” went on Mr. X—. “How many of you would want your husbands, brothers, sweethearts, to return before the war is ended?”

All the hands were frantically raised.

“You have certainly not grasped the meaning of 161 my question,” said the speaker, “I will repeat it over to you. Now listen well.”

An intent expression was marked on the women's faces.

“Would you want your husbands, brothers, lovers, to come back home without having thoroughly licked the Germans?”

This time there was not a movement in the audience, and the speaker had a satisfied look on his smiling face.

The women composing my audience listened with interest and sympathy to the sad stories I told them about the women and children living in the devastated areas in France. Many eyes were filled with tears as they heard about the sufferings of the poor stricken people of my country.

One evening when we were dining in our sitting-room before going to a meeting we heard a band playing near our hotel. On looking through the window we saw about thirty young women marching up and down the street, preceded by one of their number carrying a long stick with which she was beating time. We were much surprised at this unexpected sight of highly disciplined girls, all looking very serious as they blew into the wind-instruments or beat the drums. On account of the oppressive heat the majority were wearing white blouses, colored skirts, and were bare-headed.

“What band is that?” I asked the waiter.

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“I don't know, Ma'am,” he answered. “Probably some more than usually active women wishing to get rid of their superfluous energy. I suppose they're having a fine time.”

The following evening a rally, in celebration of the 120th anniversary of the nation's military machine, was preceded by a parade through the business streets.

At eight o'clock the procession came to the hotel to fetch us. It was composed of members of the French Society of St. Louis, members of the Home Guard, drafted men, marines, Curlee's Drum Corps, Kresge's Marinettes, and the Elks' Band. Four marines detached themselves from the procession and marched two on each side of our motor-car, escorting us to Twelfth and Olive Streets, where I was intended to speak.

Two bands were playing in the parade, one military and the other composed of young women clad in khaki uniform; these we recognized as the ones we had heard rehearsing the previous evening.

As we passed through the streets we were saluted by many people, one person, in particular, attracting our attention. This was a woman who took off her flower-trimmed hat with a most dignified gesture as we passed by, saluting thus the representatives of France.

Then we arrived at Twelfth Street, where a stand had been erected from which the speakers were to 163 address the crowd in appealing for marine recruits. A pretty young woman sang the French patriotic hymn. The band played to gather the crowd, and after the speeches were made and the “Marseillaise” sung, to my amusement, Mr. Y—, chairman of the chamber of commerce, made the following announcement:

“The countess will shake hands with the men who enlist in the marines!” And I am happy to say that I shook hands with thirty-seven volunteers, who at once jumped on our stand with the nimbleness of young tigers.

Then without consulting the person in question, Mr. Y—followed his first statement with the following:

“The young lady who has sung the ‘Marseillaise’ so beautifully is willing to kiss the next man that mounts the platform!”

But when an extremely dirty man came forward as the next, the young singer exclaimed, hiding herself behind my skirts:

“Oh, never! Not that one!”

But the man had only wanted to explain that on account of having lost two fingers of his right hand he could not enlist. And the young singer felt very much relieved.

Having to catch an early train next morning for Kansas City, we had packed our trunks and suitcases before retiring. Being tired out, we rejoiced 164 at the prospect of a restful night. But, alas! two hours later we were awakened by a terrific noise that made us jump out of bed as though shot. Running to the window, we saw from all directions fire engines tearing through the streets at a speed that seemed to vie with that of aërial craft. Some of the engines were motor driven, but the majority were horse-drawn. Then against the sky we saw lurid flames that seemed to come from the left wing of our hotel.

For an instant we thought the house on fire and wondered if we had not better dress and be ready for any emergency. However, we concluded that the hotel management would have warned us in case of danger. And then we realized that the flames and the dense smoke now filling the air were coming from a building opposite the left wing of the hotel.

It was most impressive to watch the firemen, who worked until seven-thirty in the morning, trying to master this huge fire. They were wonderful as they rushed from one fire-engine to another, carrying out orders with a discipline and dexterity that we most enthusiastically admired. Our night was far from being a restful one. It can easily be imagined that eight or ten fire-engines all working at a time are not calculated to soothe one's nerves, but have the opposite effect of a lullaby.

On inquiring next morning as to the result of the 165 conflagration, we learned that the house had been burned down, but there had been no loss of life, two dogs being the only victims of the disaster.

We spent this day in the train, reaching Kansas City in the evening, still very tired and hoping for a more restful night than the previous one. We decided not to let the authorities know of our arrival until the next morning, and settled down at the hotel.

At eleven o'clock, just as we were getting into bed, the telephone-bell rang in the sitting-room, and my sister went to answer. It was a reporter from the X—paper, who wanted an interview.

“But I cannot see you now,” I heard my sister say.

Nevertheless, the man insisted on getting an interview by telephone. Then we shut our eyes and got to sleep at last.

Suddenly we were awakened by the well-known telephone-bell, and I glanced quickly at the clock. I found it was one A. M. My sister, thinking the hotel was on fire, rushed to the telephone. It was a reporter from a rival paper, who also wanted an interview.

“You cannot refuse giving me some information as you have spoken to the other reporter,” said this man.

And my sister, although falling from exhaustion, gave him in his turn the politest of interviews.

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Had we not been sent officially by the Committee on Public Information, we should probably have hung up the receiver. But we considered it as part of our mission always to give the information demanded, even at such an unearthly hour as the above. And the

next morning not a single word about our arrival appeared in the papers. All this trouble had been given us for nothing.

In every town we went to I always held a meeting at the Red Cross rooms, where hundreds of women were making surgical dressings for the hospitals, and garments for the refugees.

To my mind, the Red Cross organization was another proof of the extraordinary unity that reigned throughout the whole country. The amount of work accomplished was stupendous from what I could judge when, after my lectures, I was taken to examine the work accomplished by these devoted women.

Almost invariably I had to go through the rite of looking at the famous electric machine that can cut through many thicknesses of stuff, and at innumerable jackets and skirts for the women and children refugees in France.

“Oh, yes!” I always exclaimed. “I know all about it, and have made it work at Y—town, and Z—city, etc. It is truly wonderful.”

Then bewitching eyes would look at me and plead:

“But won't you try *ours?* ”

How could I refuse?

“Very well,” and I would grasp the machine and cut, cut, cut along with a vengeance, carefully following the outline of the garments traced with chalk.

It had a real fascination to it. The sort of work one would take a wild fancy to for a week, getting up every morning at five o'clock and forgetting one's meals to do it. I have become

an expert after touring the United States and having been asked in most towns “just to try theirs!”

America was thoroughly awakened to the war, and was carrying it out on the most gigantic scale any human mind could conceive.

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CHAPTER XV OUR RECEPTION AT CAMP DODGE

BEFORE leaving for the new continent we had become acquainted with one of the American habits, that a woman has her elbow taken by a man whenever she wishes to undertake such very perilous enterprises as going up or down steps, getting in or out of a motor-car, crossing a street, walking along a crowded road, etc.

My sister and I were soon to discover many other customs besides that particular one. For instance, American men will push your chair up to the table for you at dinner. Women have to do that for themselves at luncheon, as men are never at home for that meal.

Then the mistress of the house, contrary to what is done in France, is served before the guests. I have seen this custom in use everywhere in the United States except in the Eastern cities, such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, where European modes of living prevail. I suppose it comes from the ancient idea that by tasting and drinking before the guest does the mistress of the house proclaims in this way her firm conviction 169 that the meal will be an inoffensive one. And after all it is angelic of her to be the one in the family to take all the risks.

Another habit that struck me in America is that the host nearly always precedes you in going through doors or up-stairs, in order to show you the way, which is, to my mind, a cleverer way than ours of urging our guests on with encouraging gestures that generally fail to indicate clearly the direction they should take.

One thing that we found delightful in this country, and had for us quite a patriarchal flavor was the way in which husbands and wives address each other as “father” and “mother;” very often, also, they call their son and daughter “brother” and “sister.” I suppose it is because they try to look at life from their children's point of view, which is not astonishing, if one considers how progressive America is!

This makes me think of an old lady whom I once knew. She was nearly ninety years of age, and still lived so much in the future that she invariably dated her letters at least three days in advance.

We were now at Des Moines, after having left Kansas City in a rush, which, in fact, had by that time become our way of doing everything. I had lectured at a big luncheon given by the chamber of commerce, and had hurried away to catch the train.

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The heat for some weeks past had been appalling, so the first thing we did on arriving in Des Moines was to go to the dining-room and get some iced milk.

On the table was a pink newspaper spread out before us, and my gaze was attracted by the heading, “Countess arrives,” and a photograph.

“But this does not at all resemble you. What *have* they done?” said my sister, with a puzzled look. And on reading it we found that the article was not intended for me, but for the Countess of X—, who was touring the United States on behalf of the disabled Irish soldiers, and who had arrived that day.

As no one knew we were in the town, our arrival being announced only for the following day, we decided to spend a peaceful night. In order to obtain this result we had our telephone blocked with paper, so as not to be disturbed as we had been in the town we had just left. And now when our telephone-bell rang it was capable only of a muffled sound something like “Brr-brr-brr,” which we found much less irritating than “Dring-dring-dring.”

May I offer this as a hint which may be helpful for nervous people or for those on the verge of a nervous breakdown?

Having seen in the papers that I was not expected to speak before the afternoon, I decided to rest all morning, and, in consequence, gave strict orders at the desk that we should not be disturbed.

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My sister, whose work generally began when mine was ended, or when I had a rare minute for resting, was in the sitting-room wading through the correspondence when at about ten-thirty a knock at the door caused her to turn round, and she found herself facing a lady who said:

“I was told down-stairs that you had given orders not to receive, so I thought I would take my chance.”

Then a few minutes later there was another knock at the door and a young girl came in:

“I'm a reporter and would like to see the Countess.”

“She is resting and cannot receive now.”

“I was told so at the desk; so I thought all the same I would try to see her.”

Is this how orders are respected in the country of liberty! However, the young girl was charming, and my sister gave her an interview which appeared in an afternoon paper. But that brought upon her later the following remark from a reporter who had tried all morning in vain to reach us: “Why were you so exclusive?”

She explained that she had been taken by surprise; he simply smiled and wrote a nice article, which appeared the next morning in one of the local papers.

We visited Camp Dodge, one of the largest camps in the United States, constructed on a site seven 172 miles in length to accommodate forty thousand men. It was, moreover, to be enlarged for an additional twelve thousand men.

In reality, it is a stupendous wooden city built in three months. The Huns would certainly cry out, “ *Kamerad* ,” were they to see how hard at work the Americans are, and with what thoroughness they decided to carry the war to an end.

The general commanding the camp received us most courteously, and put his car at our disposal for visiting Camp Dodge under military escort. The heat was intense, there not being a single tree to afford shade throughout the entire camp. It was so hot that even the brain seemed to melt away with the rest of one. An effectual “cure” for fat ladies!

We were shown all over the camp and visited the hospital, the Hostess House, the Y. M. C. A., Knights of Columbus, and Salvation Army buildings, then the dormitories and the refectories, where we were offered a most delightful and very refreshing beverage, and then we went to the bakery.

It was so hot in there that we wondered whether they had taken us in to show us the first wheat bread we had seen in the States, or if it were that by comparison we might find the hot rays of the sun cool after our visit.

A wonderful invention is the wireless telephone, 173 which was explained to us by a colonel. He proposed to give us a demonstration, and sent one of his officers out of the building, telling him to give us a message when at some distance away.

Presently we heard a ghostly voice pronouncing in a whisper:

“I'm a German spy. *Donnerwetter!* I'm keeping an eye upon you!”

We were then convinced of the efficiency of the instrument.

Before dining with the French officers sent to the camp as instructors, we were shown the carrier-pigeons.

In the evening I addressed the boys in their moving-picture theater. It was a real pleasure to speak to this enthusiastic and most sympathetic crowd of splendid young men.

The next day we were told that our photographs had appeared in the papers. So my sister went out to try to get a few copies. At the corner of a street a man was selling papers, and she asked him for several numbers of yesterday's issue. The man, astonished, looked at her, then slapped her on the shoulder, exclaiming:

“Why, I saw your picture yesterday. You're in it! You're in it! D' you want twenty of 'em?” He kept slapping her on the back. Then he called a friend of his and said, “This is one of the Countesses.”

“How do you like Des Moines?” was the inevitable question. Whereupon followed a grand conversation about the United States, France, the war, and all parted the best of friends.

That morning, Lady X—sent us a note inviting us to luncheon. My sister wrote her an answer and then telephoned for a bell-boy. When he came up I handed him the letter from our sitting-room.

A few minutes later the boy came back to our other room, where my sister was, and handed her the letter she had written herself.

“Oh! no, this is not for me. There is another countess in the hotel and you must find her.”

He looked as puzzled as if she had spoken Hebrew.

Now I must say a word about the chewing-gum, otherwise United States citizens might suspect us of not really having been to their country.

It may be said that chewing is a very important feature of their daily life, and that the people chew, chew, and better chew! One never can get away from it, and it surprised me very much that the Americans, who always want to get ahead of every one and everything, who always must, to use the modern war phrase, get over the top, should like this chewing-gum, which is as everlasting as ever were the everlastings of the old-fashioned gardens.

The whole country is swayed by its rule; the only 175 way to get rid of one's gum is by laying it aside. And in connection with this necessity surprises often awaited us.

I remember one afternoon, sitting near a table in a room in which I had never been before, when my eye was attracted by a little ball peeping out from ander the edge of this table. On looking closer, to my great amazement, I discovered that this little round thing was the remnant of a piece of chewing-gum, which some worthy citizen had not been able to vanquish. I suppose that in his defeat, on seeing us enter the room, he had deposited his too-faithful friend under the table; for the chewing-gum is certainly the truest and most abiding companion of any American—it sticks to him “closer than a brother,” and is ever ready to be chewed.

On arriving in the States I was quite unaccustomed to the chewing-gum habit. It was in an elevator that I was first made acquainted with it.

There were six of us in the elevator. As we were all going to the higher floors, I had plenty of time to contemplate the other people. They were men. Pityingly I concluded that one was suffering from an unlucky affliction of the jaw, so I transferred my glance to his neighbor. But he, too, seemed to have the same affliction. So I thought I would rest my eyes by looking at the next one. Good heavens! He was no different from the other two,

and when 176 I looked at the fourth I was astounded to find that he also was making his mouth move in the same rabbit-like manner. But we fortunately reached our destined floor just at this moment, and stepping out, I involuntarily exclaimed:

“But surely have all these poor men got jaw disease, and are going up to some specialist on a higher floor for treatment?”

One of the most remarkable traits of the American character is their spontaneous friendliness. Often on meeting an American for the first time you will find him eager to tell you all about his life, what he has already accomplished, what he is at present carrying out, and what he is endeavoring to undertake in the future. For as the American rarely keeps to the “same job” all his life, he often indulges in thinking of the one he will next be able to take up.

And then if you have enough time to listen, he will tell you all about his relatives, so that after an half hour's conversation you feel perfectly well acquainted with his whole family.

I remember once, when on a train, being addressed by a lady who had heard me speak some months before, and who kept up, not a conversation with me, but a solo, in which she told me in detail all about her family. Her son was the leading topic of the monologue, and now I know all about this charming young man of twenty years of age. 177 I have never seen him, but I was told his life in detail, and even informed of the number of pounds he weighed.

Mystery is an unknown quality in this country, the Americans are too out-spoken and frank to wish to hide anything from the public. They are attracted to those who are like themselves, truthful, simple, clean-minded, and easily moved by the expression of a beautiful thought or action, inspired by a high motive.

The visitor realizes that the nation is striving to attain to greater perfection of life, endeavoring to resemble the ideal type it has created, and which is quite different from the Latin conception of saintliness.

For a European saint must renounce earthly possessions; he gives up wealth and either spends his life in administering to the needs of others or retires from active life and spends his time in prayers for the salvation of the souls of the rest of humanity, so that they also shall one day receive “la grâce” that he has had the privilege of finding.

But the American “saint” could not conceive of shutting himself up and spending his life in prayers. He would mingle with his fellow-men, his thoughts centered on the realization of physical and moral healthiness, and ways of attaining general happiness. His time would be devoted to the welfare of his countrymen, endeavoring to raise 178 the mass of the people to a higher level, and trying to make them benefit from the same advantages that he himself enjoys.

On leaving Des Moines we spent a few hot days in Omaha, and met there some very charming people, whose feelings toward our dear country were so sincere and loving that it gave us great happiness to be with them. But we had to part only too soon, as always happened wherever one meets delightful people, and that was our case in every town we visited. The Americans were adorably kind and charming, and we always felt what great friends we would have made if only we had remained longer in each place.

On arriving at the Hotel Fontenelle I wrote a letter to my parents; on the envelope was a print of the hotel, and above it these words, “Built for you to enjoy.” This again is a distinctive sign of the hospitable and kind-hearted attitude of this part of the states.

Although Omaha is not the capital of Nebraska, its citizens always smile in speaking of Lincoln, their capital, which is, as they say, a small city of only fifty thousand inhabitants.

It is certainly smaller than Omaha, but in July it has one thing greater than the other town, and that is its heat.

We never in our whole lives suffered from combustion to such a degree, and we are still amazed to have come out of the ordeal alive. I really think 179 we owe our lives to the great quantity of ice-water we swallowed, and the numerous ice creams we absorbed, and the cooling motor drives we took between the meetings.

One evening we went out motoring with one of General Pershing's charming sisters, and his little nephew. In that climate the motor-car is a God-send and undoubtedly the nicest ventilator yet invented.

Among the people we met was a lady who told us that she had been to Europe and had visited Paris and Rome.

“And what did you think of those cities?” we asked eagerly.

“Nice, very nice, but I was disappointed in their size; they are so small!” was the unexpected answer of the inhabitant of a capital of fifty thousand people!

There are two things we always found in the hotels wherever we went, a private bath-room and good food. We became acquainted with many American dishes, and immensely enjoyed the puffed rice, quite unknown in Europe. As to the cream, we had not tasted it since the Declaration of War in 1914, and we simply thought it a “drink for the goddesses.”

What we equally appreciated was the iced coffee served in high glasses, and swallowed through a straw. The way in which it is prepared in the 180 States is not usual in our country, and we always enjoyed pouring the boiling coffee on the ice, then adding sugar and the wonderful American cream. This mixture taken during the meal is certainly the most refreshing and cooling drink imaginable. The iced tea prepared in that same way

was also much appreciated by the two sisters, and nowhere more than in Lincoln, did they enjoy those refreshing and non-alcoholic drinks.

In the dining-room of the Lincoln Hotel were written these words:

“WELCOME THE COMING SPEED THE PARTING GUEST”

A distinctive peculiarity of the Western Towns is the width of the streets. They are very broad and spacious, and this, of necessity, owing to the number of motor-cars circulating in the towns. Everybody seems to have one or several cars, which they undoubtedly all take out at the same time, for there is not a spare space left in the streets for putting a car up to the pavement. And even there they are so numerous, that they are in file, with scarcely an inch between them and placed head on to the pavement, the rest of the car standing out in the middle of the road.

On each side of them again there are other rows of motor-cars, nearly full length out into the road, seeming almost like a necessary part of the street. 181 Between these lines of cars the traffic must find place, and the foot-passengers circulate. It often happened that, wanting to stop at any special place, we were obliged to go a block or two farther on so as to find a place to park. I came to the conclusion that in those towns one has less to walk if one goes on foot, for one is then spared many of the superfluous steps it is otherwise necessary to take to find one's car again.

And so it is that the car holds an important, if not the first place of all, in the lives of the Westerners. We were told by them that “the house was a luxury, but the car a necessity.” And truly they live in them, sleep in them, and finally go camping with their dearly beloved motor-cars. We saw whole families packed into them, with rolled-up tents tied to the sides, happily traveling along the roads until they found the suitable spot where they were to put up their tents and spend the night.

I wonder whether living in a motor-car is more progressive than inhabiting a comfortable house! In France the home is everything in our lives; we embellish it with loving care; we love it, and try to make it look as pretty and as attractive as possible. In fact, our whole life is centered in our houses, and once we have settled in a nice one, we never think of changing and going into a new one. We transform the house we are living in; we have it modernized with the new inventions; every year 182 we try to make it more and more comfortable, but we are very conservative as to the old walls themselves. They know our thoughts, they have been the witnesses of sad and happy hours; we have radiated into them part of our vitality. How then could we part with such friends? Often the same house has been inhabited by several generations. You inherit it with beautiful old furniture that has belonged to the family for centuries past, and that has its story.

In the West, this could certainly not be, as many of the towns there cannot number more than fifty years of existence, and I even think it would not be congenial to their mentality, which is different from ours.

For them, houses are places in which they occasionally sleep in winter, when the weather is too cold for out-of-door life, and even then the beds are generally placed in the open air on a porch. These homes do not give one the feeling of being inhabited, but rather the impression of a place through which one rushes. The people seldom stay at home, as they scarcely ever take their meals there, going out to the club or restaurant for them.

The country-club is the great attraction, when the weather is fine enough to go there, and every city, every town, has at least one country-club, and often several for different classes of people. In these various clubs, which are more or less wealthy, 183 the attractions are the same, tennis, golf, bathing, and dancing. For the great tendency of the West is that all human beings should enjoy the same prerogatives, the same enjoyments in whatever class they belong. It is truly democracy in the most beautiful sense of the word, life as it

will be understood later by all, but it is a new conception, which cannot as yet be grasped by, or applied to, every country.

I remember once reading in an article that “the first principle of evolution is the supremacy of individuals efficient in their interests, but that the first principle in the evolution of the social world depends not upon individual supremacy, but upon the subordination of individuals, so that collective efficiency may be attained.”

It is, in fact, the renunciation of personal benefit for the good of the whole. This conception of life is far superior to that of the rest of the world, for whom life is nearly always based on favoritism. By this I mean that certain classes alone have what the others are longing for.

But in the West the great beauty of their way of looking at life resides in the fact that the upper classes wish the others to benefit as much as possible, by the same advantages and joys as they themselves have. I had never before found that attitude; nor had I thought that such principles were applied on this planet! And it was very interesting 184 for us to have come in contact with people looking at life from this new point of view.

After leaving Lincoln, the country rises steadily up to the foot of the Rockies, and the slope is so gradual that it is impossible, when in the train, to realize that the plains are rising to the height of 5270 feet.

It took us fourteen hours to get to Denver. In the dining-car we lunched with several notabilities of the State through which we were passing.

“Won't you have a cigarette?” one of them—a tall, dark-haired, and strikingly good-looking man—asked me.

“With pleasure,” I answered, “as I don't belong to any of your frightfully virtuous anti-tobacco leagues.”

And the strikingly good-looking man took out a cigarette from his gold case; then, putting it between his lips he lit it, blew a few puffs, and most politely offered me the prepared article.

“Oh, no, not that end!” he shrieked in alarm when he saw me endeavoring to thrust the lighted part into my mouth. However, I think he failed to understand why I was trying to be so original in my smoking methods.

But afterward I learned that preparing other people's cigarettes in that extremely personal manner was a well-known and very polite custom in that particular part of the country.

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CHAPTER XVI NO INDIANS AND NO COWBOYS

NOTHING can depict our keen disappointment on discovering that what we had imagined America was going to be, a country thickly peopled with Indians and cowboys, was almost a pure invention of the famous American films that have overrun Europe for several years. And perhaps, after all, not truly a pure invention, but only the reminiscence of a past age lost in the hazy distance of at least fifty years.

Think what a terrible shock it is to realize suddenly that one is born half a century too late, and on that account missing what one had so hoped to see!

Indians nowadays have become dull, stupid, indolent, and civilized. They live on reservations situated in out-of-the-way places, and have nothing of the sharp-witted cleverness that Fenimore Cooper attributed to them, but perhaps that existed only in his own brilliant brain.

I had thought, in my ignorance, of going to make speeches in the reservations, to awaken the war-like 186 spirit of the Indians to such a pitch that they would put on all their feathers and war-paint, and execute their most daring and wildest dances. And then I could picture

my sister and myself escaping from their hands in the car, just as they were going to scalp us. That really would have been a wonderful adventure somewhat in the grand American film style! But anecdotes, I must add, still circulate in the West and made us believe that our conclusions were wrong, and that a subtle poetry and an exquisite refinement still lingers in the vanishing red race.

We were told the story of a party of American tourists in Denver, who, having heard that an Indian tribe was going to celebrate a religious festivity in South Colorado, drove there on the appointed day, taking a guide with them as interpreter. “When they got to their destination,” our narrator explained to us, “they found a tall, beautiful Indian, with all his feathers and war-paint on, standing in the center of a large group of Indians, who had gathered there from the neighboring mountains. They learned from the guide that the tall Indian was a high-priest, and that he was going to deliver a speech in his own language.

“‘The soul of the Indian is fearless,’ he began in a deep slow voice, ‘no human power has ever made it tremble, no divine wrath has caused it to quiver; neither the thunder as it shakes the earth 187 and rolls along the clouds into the skies, nor the lightning as it lashes the highest fern on the mountain-top and splits the bark into bits, nor the furious torrent when it dashes from boulder to boulder, nor the wicked eye of the evil enemy, can ever strike dismay into his strong heart; no, nothing in heaven nor on earth can ever make the true Indian depart from his calm.’

“‘What's he saying? What's he saying? Translate it to us! whispered the tourists, with feverish curiosity. The guide phlegmatically threw away his chewing-gum, and pointed to the high-priest:

“‘Gosh! that guy there, why he says he ain't afraid of anything!’”

We were also expecting to see cowboys everywhere, taming wild horses, throwing the lasso as we had seen them do when Buffalo Bill came to Paris and gave us in our childhood a false idea of American life.

Another of our hopes was to go to a ranch and lead an uncivilized life in a primitive house surrounded by cattle. We expressed this wish to some delightful friends of ours, who immediately proposed to take us to lunch out on their ranch. Joyful prospect! Were we at last going to find “our America”? It was with a certain amount of emotion that we started on this excursion.

After motoring for many miles we found ourselves 188 facing the most lovely country-house imaginable, with a concrete tennis-court, on which the people who lived there did roller-skating. Then we entered the house and found ourselves in a most attractive hall, with a piano, a phonograph, and the most comfortable of furniture. The luncheon was very well served, and after the meal we went into the garden, where we found a peaceful and very tame-looking bear living in a cage.

“What an exquisite country-place!” exclaimed.

“Yes,” said a visitor. “Is n't this a wonderful ranch?”

And so this after all was a ranch! Decidedly our ideas were getting still more mixed up, and we were beginning to find America much too civilized for European tourists. Then I was no longer astonished at the answer I got when, after asking a lady of a Western town whether she had ever been to Europe, she said, “Oh, no! I'm too afraid of roughing it!” We had now left the great plains behind us and found other scenery, more beautiful and imposing, as we approached Denver, situated in the Rocky Mountains.

The aspect of this town differs from that of most Middle-Western towns, which all resemble one another somewhat, the architecture of the houses being all on the same model. This to my mind, makes 189 for taste and distinction. The style most used has a porch, which

is like a balcony on each side of the entrance door. Some houses are built in the colonial style, which is pretty and aristocratic.

In front of each house there is generally a lawn separating it from the neighboring dwellings, but which is no protection either from the foot-prints of the outsiders or from the indiscreet glances of the passerby.

In France, on the contrary, we would be more inclined to begin building the wall around the property before constructing the house, so as to be screened from strangers' eyes, and have the feeling of being in our own private surroundings. But over here private life becomes public, and I hardly see how one could hide anything from the neighbors, as a great part of the home life is spent on the porch.

These porches are certainly very comfortable, with their seductive rocking-chairs, and the indispensable swinging-chair, from which my sister could never tear herself away so highly did she appreciate them. They were a novelty for us, as we do not have them in France.

As to the rocking-chairs, it seemed to us that the whole country is full of them; and when one is not accustomed to them, one cannot enter a room without having one or several of their kind, invariably thrust their protruding feet into one's 190 own when one is innocently passing by. This happens so much that had I not received rather a polished education, I certainly would have spent my time swearing at them, as they were constantly in my way; and I never did get accustomed to meeting the extreme part of a chair so far away from its center!

We went to a delightful dinner-party in Denver, at which I answered many eager questions about what the boys were doing “over there,” and, in turn, I asked to be told “Colorado stories.”

“One of the first proprietors of the Brown Palace in which you are residing,” a lady informed us, “was a man who had been attracted to Colorado by the gold mines. After

successfully working for many months, he reaped a big fortune and he arrived in Denver one day with a shaggy beard, miner's clothes, and the general look of a man who has lived a long time outside the pale of civilization.

"'Give me a room,' he said to the clerk at the hotel desk.

"'A room! Why, no, we won't give you one!' The clerk eyed the new-comer suspiciously.

"'All right, young man; then you'll hear from me.'

"And the gold miner went out, found the proprietor, and that very day bought the Palace, which he called 'Brown Palace' from his own name; and 191 so he was able to choose the room he preferred to sleep in that night!"

I was seated next to a clever business man, whose conversation was very entertaining, and he gave me many hints about life as it was fifty years ago when Denver was only a small village with a few shanties. He also spoke to us about the gold hunters of the present and the preceding generations.

"In the eyes of a gold-seeker, money loses its real value," he explained. "It is somewhat like bank-notes spread out on a gambling-table; moreover the mental attitude of those gold hunters is a desire to show off and astonish the public.

"One miner who had found a vast amount of gold arrived on foot in one of the Colorado towns, and, after searching for some time, finally met a farmer who promised to drive him to the railway station. On the way, the exuberant miner asked the farmer for how much he would sell his horse and carriage, and without further parley, he bought it and thrust the requisite amount of gold into the hands of his new acquaintance.

"Then they drove up to the station, and, getting down, the miner exclaimed in loud tones:

“‘Bless me! But I can't take the horse and carriage I've bought on the train with me. So just keep it with the gold, old pal! It's all the more for you!’”

One of the most remarkable things we saw in 192 America was the wonderful organ of the Municipal Auditorium in Denver.

Every day at noon free recitals are given and the public crowds into the big hall. I saw there many children and mothers belonging to the working classes, peacefully enjoying the concert given by Mr. Clarence Reynolds, the city organist. The instrument combines an immense cathedral organ with everything in orchestral effects. It embodies many instruments such as harps, chimes, xylophones, glockenspiel, vibrating bells, sleighbells, drums, timpani, castanets, tambourines, and a Steinway grand piano.

At the end of the concert we listened to a remarkable musical achievement called “Military Fantasy,” also played by Mr. Reynolds. It was a wonderful symbolical expression of the various emotions felt by each American soldier as he starts out to Europe to fight as a crusader.

At first we heard some of the old songs of the Civil War, such as “We're tenting to-night,” played in soft tones as a reminiscence and a legacy of the past. Suddenly came the sound of a buglecall, fifes, and drums—all the sounds of a camp astir, preparing for action. Then the rhythmic cadence of regiments marching. The troops embark, and softer modulations come to evoke the sadness of parting; at this point distant rumblings give us the impression of a storm at sea, approaching 193 closer and closer, while the lights in the auditorium grow dimmer and finally we are plunged almost into complete obscurity, which heightens the emotional effect. Then peals of thunder resound through the building, and there is the sound of waves lashing the sides of the ship; shafts of lightning flash across the scenery on the stage. Finally the storm disappears behind the horizon; we enter a peaceful zone, and the lights in the hall are turned on again; the soldiers are now

disembarking; they enter the trenches, and the fantasy ends with the songs of the Allies played majestically as an apotheosis.

It was truly a wonderful performance, and it proved to us once again how strongly music reacts on the emotions of a collectivity, and I saw that in Denver music was becoming a strong factor in the education of the people.

One of the things which most attracted our notice while in Colorado was the extraordinary nature of the atmosphere. Its subtlety and lightness, due to the fact that it is highly charged with electricity, makes one think more quickly and think more beautifully there than elsewhere in America, and it has upon the brain somewhat the same reaction as do the boulevards of Paris, and Montmartre, where dwell the “rapins,” and again of the “quartier Latin” of the artists.

Certainly it is bound to become the American 194 cradle of geniuses, and I do think that in generations to come art will flourish here vigorously and give to the world a new type of beauty.

“Colorado has, I believe, a wonderful future,” I wrote to my mother; “here the brain becomes very receptive, open to new ideas. After the pioneers will come the day of the soldiers who will return to America from Europe as the personification of the idea of glory —glory which is a step in advance beyond luxury. This will be a new ideal. And then the wealth acquired by the pioneers will go to their grandsons, who, thus enabled to lead more idle lives, will begin to dream—dream of beauty born of the imagination and influenced by the loveliness surrounding them in this wonderful part of the country. People will give themselves more to thinking instead of only to action, and will become creators of a new form of beauty. For, yes, beauty is still lacking to-day in many parts of industrial America!”

That afternoon we arrived at the Broadmoor, a newly opened and wonderful hotel in the Italian villa style, situated in the mountains three miles from Colorado Springs. It is built on the cosmopolitan plan, and the rooms are exquisitely furnished in the French style.

We spent the evening on our flower-filled terrace, lounging in comfortable chairs, looking out at the mountains and the setting sun and at a lovely 195 pink cloud behind which played the summer lightning; the effect thus produced was magical. Then gradually the stars began to shine in a dark blue sky, and the lights of the town of Colorado Springs twinkled in the distance like diamonds. It was perfect, yet, no, something was lacking. What was it? Ah I had it! It was animation.

We had the scenery, but not the human play or the actors. And I began to conjure up a vision of an old-world banquet on this terrace, spread under a silken awning, with costly carpets underfoot, and rich cushions on sofas and divans; with lovely women and handsome men sitting about, and a group of musicians, and wine in abundance (Colorado has just become a dry State!) and songs and thrilling discussions on life, philosophy, and art, and to serve us, negroes in wonderful costumes like those of Zamor, Madame du Barry's black page.

To my thinking only so would Colorado have a rightful complement to its wondrous setting. “Ah, no!” I hear many good Americans exclaiming. “Let it ever remain as it is, God's country, a true paradise of Nature's own!”

It was late, but I was enjoying our holiday; it was a rest to the mind. Emerson says, “Dedication to one thought is quickly odious,” and it seemed to me I had experienced it by thinking too much about my work. 196 The Government had planned a week's rest for us at Colorado Springs, where I spoke only twice. Never did any holiday seem to us so enjoyable as that one. It was like being transported suddenly into blissful Nirvana, with the certainty of being able to get out of it whenever we wanted.

From the Broadmoor we made several excursions. One of them was to drive right up in a motor-car to Pike's Peak, over fourteen thousand feet high. The road is a daring achievement, which winds its way quite to the summit. Here we found an inn surmounted by a platform, from which we got a marvelous panoramic view of the Rockies, through the telescope.

We felt frightfully giddy up there and experienced a singular feeling of emptiness in the brain, as if we had suddenly become anemic in the last degree.

Nothing is more impressive, I believe, than the view of the plains seen from the top of Pike's Peak. Like a vast ocean they appear to spread to the infinite, and the changing clouds cast their moving shadows over them, producing the effect of waves, of which the crests are formed by masses of white rocks. This illusion is one of the most remarkable I have ever experienced, and had we not had the certitude of being thousands of miles away from the sea, we would have believed ourselves driving along the coast.

The Garden of the Gods is yet another celebrated excursion frequented by tourists, and the huge, bright-red rocks affecting fantastic shapes seem like the guardian deities of the Indian race.

“This strange scenery,” a friend informed us, “is due to the fact that the wind has blown the dust from the plains against these rocks for centuries, producing in this way the effect of a rough file, which has slowly moulded the stone into sculptured masses. Some fifteen or twenty years ago this country was still inhabited by Indian tribes, and they would gather here amongst these rocks to perform religious rites; but all this belongs already to past history, and this man coming toward you is one of the last vestiges of bygone days.”

We saw advancing a tall Indian. His face was smeared with heavy stripes of paint; on his head he wore the famous headgear of feathers, and around his neck I could see long

rows of strange colored beads. Here indeed was a wild Indian in full gala costume, but nothing of the savage appeared in his deportment. The expression of his eyes was dull, and in them was a look of dreariness beyond description; the whole attitude of the man revealed a moral and physical depression that nothing could ever dispel. It was truly like a case without hope. All he could do was to sell post-cards to the tourists. Yes, there is no doubting that the red race will not long survive.

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We also went to visit the Cave of the Winds, and it reminded me of the Grotte de Han in Belgium. One of the singularities of these caves is a room formed by stalactites like all the others, but where I discovered innumerable little pieces of wire all stuck into the rock.

“What is this?” I inquired of one of the many charming girls who had accompanied us on this excursion.

She laughed:

“Those are hair-pins. We have a strange superstition in this part of the world that if you thrust one of your hair-pins into this rock, you will be married in a year.”

And as if they were accomplishing a sacred rite, each girl deposited this feminine emblem on the walls. I have often noticed that superstition seems to spread mostly in mountainous countries, where the people are more in contact with strange phenomena, and where they have to protect themselves against the elements of nature much more than do the people of the plains. The Cave of the Winds was discovered by two young boys some fifteen years ago, and to-day there must be at least several hundred thousand hair-pins imbedded in the rock. I wonder whether all those hundred thousand girls have found husbands!

Colorado Springs is mostly inhabited by Easterners who are attracted there by the wonderful climate, 199 and also by many invalids who settle in this part of the country for their health. In the week we spent there we had time to make some delightful friendships.

We were also taken to visit the Canyon City State Penitentiary, where Mr. George Tynam, the director, is one of the pioneers of the honor system applied to the convicts.

The drive from Colorado Springs is one of the most beautiful in the world, and from the road, which winds endlessly around the highest Colorado peaks, we caught glimpses of the distant chain of the Rocky mountains, stretching far away into New Mexico. Snow-slips often destroy the roads in a few hours, and sometimes open up a wide chasm into which a motor-car could easily fall and disappear, and for this reason one has to be particularly careful while motoring, specially at night. We saw a road that had been sectioned in this way, and we passed over the new one recently built almost beside the damaged one.

The prison is situated in the center of Canyon City, but the convicts who have given their word of honor not to escape, live in a camp in tents, where they are guarded by a few jailers only.

“This honor system has worked miracles,” the under-director explained to me as we were visiting the prison. “Naturally we put on our honor lists only such men as we believe we can trust, and we 200 register but very few instances where the man has escaped. He knows that he will be arrested again, and that he will not be allowed to enjoy the comparative freedom of our camps during this second period of internment.”

“What is the work accomplished in these camps by the convicts?” I inquired.

“They are generally employed in making and in repairing the roads of this part of Colorado, and in this way they have achieved most beneficial work for the community.”

“Have you organized a similar work for your women convicts?” I asked again.

“No,” he answered, “we do not allow them to live out-of-doors under oath, but they work for the Red Cross in the prison. Come in, won't you, and see them.”

Each woman had a little cell of her own, with a window looking out on the prison courtyard, which was surrounded by high walls of masonry. In the big central hall, a number of women convicts were gathered, but only the sound of the knitting-machines could be heard in the gloomy prison atmosphere. A feeling of depression gradually crept over me.

“Are some of those women interned for life?” I asked the under-director as soon as we had gone out of the heavy iron door that gave access into the men's courtyard.

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“Yes, several of them will never again as long as they live cross this threshold, guarded, as you see, by the jailer in the observation turret above the iron door we have just passed through. He alone has the right to give admittance from the men's courtyard into the section where the women are interned. One or two of the women have sentences of ten years' imprisonment, whereas the majority will only remain here during a much shorter period.”

“But why don't you organize the honor system amongst the women, and allow them to cultivate vegetables and fruit out-of-doors? Nature has a better influence over primitive souls than thick gray walls.”

“Unfortunately our women convicts here are not in sufficient number to make it necessary to organize the honor system for them. I will now show you the men's dining-hall.”

The hall seemed immense, and I found the convicts eating their supper. The door through which we entered was surmounted by an iron cage, in which a jailer was on guard, holding a rifle in his hands.

“We have to be careful and take our precautions against any eventual mutiny,” the under-director explained to us.

When we had ended our interesting prison visit I asked our guide whether the convicts were helped 202 when the penitentiary door was closed on them, and they had to face a free world again.

“Yes,” he answered, “we never let a man or a woman go out of this prison without giving them a small sum of money for their immediate expenses, and providing them with employment of some kind; moreover, several charitable institutions help us to carry out this part of our mission, which is to allow every convict a fair chance of redeeming past errors or crimes.”

This reminded me of the story a clever American woman lawyer told me of a convict she had known, called by the pretentious nickname of Minerva. Minerva was a colored woman who had spent a few months in prison because her life was in serious need of reform.

Miss L—, my lawyer friend, applied to one of the charitable societies whose special work it is to reform the lives of disreputable characters. A situation as servant was found for Minerva, who entered the household of a doctor.

After the first week, Miss L—got a letter from her protégée:

“Dear Miss L—, I shure don't think the doctor and his wife is married!”

Another letter followed the next week:

“Dear Miss L—, there shure is terrible going's on in this yer house!”

Third week:

“Dear Miss L—, come and tak me way, I'se feared me morals is gettin' c'rrupted!”

I imagine, nevertheless, that this case must be a unique one of its kind.

Although our visit to the State penitentiary was a particularly interesting one, yet we were glad to get away from the iron doors and the cells, and breathe the free air of the wide open spaces stretching before us. Never before had I understood so keenly what freedom means, and I believe it would be a very wise thing if every man and woman had once or twice in a lifetime to visit a prison and realize the full meaning of the word liberty and all the happiness and joy pertaining to it.

Amid the many varied experiences we had in our tour, was that of speaking in Pueblo in the open air, on the square in front of the station, to the boys who were leaving for France. They were there with their relatives and friends who had come to bid them farewell.

I spoke of the warm reception they would receive in my country, and told them to “Go to Berlin!” which they all seemed quite ready to do. Then we escorted them to the train that was to. take them away, and the departure of those boys was one of the most heartbreaking scenes we ever witnessed. Some women clung desperately to the men, who had literally to tear themselves away; others were 204 weeping. One young woman fainted on the platform just as the train was steaming out. We went to her aid and learned that only a few days before she had been married to one of the men the train was now carrying away on the road to no-man's-land.

Alas! the sorrow this war has wrought in most human hearts! But as wrote Oscar Wilde in “De Profundis,” “Where there is sorrow there is holy ground.”

And in that station far away in the Rocky Mountains something sacred had happened that day—Oh! very simply, as most great things do happen in this world-a few hundred men were going from their homes, leaving behind all that was dearest to them, everything that

their hearts loved most, because they wanted to save humanity from the greatest danger that had ever threatened to destroy it.

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CHAPTER XVII A DIP IN SALTAIR WITH MORMONS

DISTANCES are tremendous in this country, and we generally had to travel many hours to get from one town to another. From Pueblo to Salt Lake City it was a twenty-four-hour journey amid the most wonderful and gorgeous scenery imaginable, and we would willingly have traveled many miles more to be certain of reaching the famous Mormon city of which we had always heard such extraordinary tales!

To begin with I must say that to all appearances the Mormons looked just like all other human beings. No particular exterior sign distinguished them from the rest of the population, although we had expected to find them dressed in what we thought would be the Mormon fashion. We expected to see men with long hair and sandals and long white robes, staves in hand; we expected the women to be dressed in a similar style, with their hair braided and low over their ears.

Nothing of the sort was there to be found as the Mormon men and women were dressed in twentieth century fashion. They live in extremely comfortable 206 houses, just as do the other citizens of Salt Lake City, for their town is not solely inhabited by those of their own faith, but also by people of all other religions.

Our train arrived three hours late, and immediately on arriving we had to attend a reception given in our honor. Then some of the ladies on the committee of reception suggested that we should go to Saltair, the big salt lake renowned all over the country for its invigorating power.

We had literally to rush out of the reception room and into the train, by which, in three quarters of an hour, we reached Saltair, where we dipped our tired persons into the lake

or, more truthfully, sat on it. For the water is so charged with salt that it requires a special effort to really sink down into it, otherwise one remains floating on its surface like a cork.

Now had we both gone there alone without having been prepared for what would happen to us, we could have believed that a miracle had taken place, and could have thought the blessings of the Almighty had come upon us in giving us the power of sitting comfortably on the surface of the waters! But when several hundred people are all “doing it,” you easily understand that you are not specially privileged, but that it is simply and only a curiosity of nature!

An organ rehearsal was given for us in the 207 Tabernacle, which is one of the largest auditoriums in the world, seating from six to eight thousand people. It is arched over by an immense vaulted ceiling of wood, being dove-tailed and so constructed without a single nail, and this self-supporting wooden roof is considered a remarkable work of engineering.

In questioning some members of our party we learned that the reason for this entirely wooden construction lay in the fact that the building was erected before the railroads reached that State, and so wood, on account of its lightness, was chosen as material. Therefore heavy nails were replaced by wooden pins.

The acoustic properties of the building are perfectly astounding and unique. We were told that a pin dropped on the ground could be heard at a distance of two hundred feet. As the Tabernacle was crowded that day we did not try the pin experience, but listened to the wonderful organ that rises majestically at one end of the building, and enjoyed the concert. This great organ is believed to be the most perfect one of its kind, and the notes resound wonderfully through the huge church.

We were told that at the religious meetings held in the Tabernacle, a member of the congregation, man or woman, is frequently called upon to preach to the faithful ones, and this generally without having been given notice beforehand.

“For, once in the pulpit, they are always inspired,” explained a Mormon lady.

This sounded so remarkable that we decided the next afternoon to attend one of these meetings. We did so, and took seats near the entrance door at the opposite end from the pulpit. A good-looking Mormon was called upon to address the assembly, and in a monotonous voice he spoke about the war and the Liberty Loan Drive. It was a discourse just like the ones we heard every day, and were beginning to know pretty well—human imagination being limited! But when an inspired Mormon speaks like the non-privileged ones of any other faith, the only thing to do is to look for the door, (which fortunately was quite near) and get a little airing in the lovely grounds around the Tabernacle.

“Our Tabernacle was planned and erected under the direction of our pioneer leader Brigham Young, the divinely chosen successor of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” we were informed by a Mormon.

“Pray tell us about the Prophet Joseph Smith; we are anxious to hear about him,” we eagerly replied.

“Joseph Smith,” said our informer, “was born in Windsor County, Vermont, in 1805, and at the age of eighteen he had a vision of an angel of God, who was to appear to him many times during the next four years. Then this angel of the Lord delivered 209 to him records engraved on plates having the appearance of gold, and covered with engravings in Egyptian characters, on which the new faith was to be founded. These plates when put together formed what is known as the ‘Book of Mormon,’ so called from their author whose name was Mormon, and they give an historical account of ancient America.”

“What is your theory on the subject?” we asked much interested.

“America was inhabited by two races, of which the first one came directly from the Tower of Babel at the time of the confusion of languages.”

“Ah! Then this at last explains the natural American tendency for building sky-scrapers!” my sister exclaimed. “And what about the other race?”

“The second one came from the city of Jerusalem about six hundred years before Christ, and destroyed the first settlers. The Indians are the remains of this race.”

Unhappily we could not that day stay longer to hear more about the foundation of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, as the “Mormon Church” ought in truth to be called.

But what excited our feminine curiosity most was to find out how all the Mormon wives got on together, so with a most amiable smile we asked a member of this faith the following question:

“Do all your wives live together in the same house?” For which we were rewarded with a most horrified look and the words:

“I have only one wife, the law forbids us now to have more than one.”

I was later drawn aside by a non-Mormon who had heard this conversation and who said:

“They all protest that they have only one wife, but we others are sure they still have several.”

“The other day,” another non-Mormon whispered in our ear, “a teacher received two new pupils in one of our schools.

“‘Tell me your name and your age?’ he asked the first boy.

“‘I'm called Peter Jones, and I'm seven!’

“‘And yours?’ asked the teacher.

“‘I'm Josephus Jones,’ answered the second boy, “and I'm seven.”

“‘Then you're twins, I suppose?’ inquired the teacher.

“‘Perhaps,’ answered one, ‘anyhow, we're twin brothers by our father!’”

What was I to think of all this? My mind was in a whirl, when a charming old lady entered the room, looking as if she had just stepped out of an old picture. She was sweet and smiling and draped in a cashmere shawl and wore a fascinating little bonnet.

“This is Aunt Emmeline,” my neighbor said,

“Come and meet Aunt Emmeline!” said another lady.

“How are you to-day, Aunt Emmeline?” I heard a third voice ask.

“But who is Aunt Emmeline?” we asked with astonishment and curiosity.

And then we learned that Emmeline B. Wells was a celebrated Mormon woman, ninety years of age, who enjoyed great popularity in Salt Lake and was called Aunt Emmeline by all its citizens. Her late husband was a pioneer, who had had seven wives, and she was the last survivor of this happy—as it cannot be called couple, let us call it “octuple.”

Emmeline Wells had journeyed with the pioneers from the State of Illinois to find the Promised Land. After selling all their belongings, they traveled some on horse back, others in wagons drawn by horses and oxen, until they reached about where Omaha stands to-day, and there they established their winter quarters.

Aunt Emmeline gave birth to a child during this long and fatiguing journey—a journey made up of hardships and privations, and during which they encountered the Pawnee Indians.

We were told that after the cold weather was over, Brigham Young left these winter quarters to search for the Promised Land, taking with him one hundred and forty-three men, three women and two 212 children. This statement brought the thought to my mind that the problem was just the reverse at that time, for instead of seven wives for one man each of the three women had from forty-seven to forty-eight men—a unique case truly sufficient to cause a break in a religion! But in order to avoid such a complication, I imagine that nine hundred and ninety-eight additional women soon followed to allow the one hundred and forty-three men their normal number of seven wives each! Finally the pioneers reached the valley of the great lake, settled there, and divided the land into lots of equal size.

The temple is a beautiful piece of architecture, and rises majestically, its six lofty pinnacles towering to the skies, seeming to call to itself the attention of Heaven. We could not enter this building, as visitors are not allowed to cross its threshold. So our feminine curiosity naturally induced us to ask why the temple doors were closed to the public, and we heard that inside that impressive building were performed the marriage and baptismal ceremonies and other sacred rites.

“Why are outsiders not admitted to all these ceremonies?” we asked a follower of that faith, and he replied as follows:

“Our Prophet Joseph Smith revealed to his followers that in celestial spheres the marriage relation exists eternally, and it is only in our temple that this sacred ceremony can be performed in its 213 eternal significance. Those of our people who are married outside our temple are married for this life only.”

“Ah! those are the lucky ones,” thought I!

And what a revelation! In itself alone this would suffice to keep away from the Mormon faith many already married couples, and make bachelors hasten to take the vow of eternal celibacy! However divorce is allowed in that church, but is most rarely granted.

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CHAPTER XVIII THE PACIFIC COAST

BEFORE the war we had often heard of California, of its wonderful flowers and lovely scenery, and to see it had been one of our dearest dreams; so it was with considerable emotion that we left Salt Lake City for Los Angeles. Here we were met at the station by several officials and some friends whom we had met in Europe, who very kindly came to greet us with some of the beautiful Californian flowers.

Los Angeles is a pretty town, with most attractive shops and broad streets. The architecture is decidedly different from that of the Middle Western towns. The houses are built on different models, and there is great variety in their construction. The architects seem to have drawn inspiration from the various European countries, for some houses are of Italian style, others Moorish, and some English. In fact it may be said that beautiful specimens of almost every style are to be found here.

Many of these dwellings have a terrace, which gives them an appearance of distinction, and at the same time makes a delightful place to live in 215 and sleep out-of-doors in the Californian climate, which is even better perhaps than ours in the South of France, on the Mediterranean coast. One of the loveliest houses we visited was in the Louis XVI style and perfectly beautiful. I must say it was a great joy for us to find one of our styles of architecture reproduced six thousand miles away from our dear country, and it gave us for a time the impression of being back in France again.

But what can one say in praise of the Californian gardens that has not already been said! They are marvelously lovely, and we saw some very beautiful ones, although, as we were there in August, the best season was over. But we were told that in spring there was an almost indescribable profusion of flowers, and we could very well picture the houses hidden by masses of variegated coloring, giving an impression of what Paradise might be like—but a Paradise resulting from man's hard work, for to our great astonishment we were informed that nothing would grow in that soil unless planted and then daily watered.

The climate is so extremely dry in that part of the country that not even a wild flower can blossom unhelped in the parched ground. On the other hand every specimen of plant or flower can flourish there in abundance if daily watered and well taken care of; even each one of the trees that line the streets is watered with the greatest care.

Thus it is through sheer love of nature that the Californians have been able to turn their State into a wondrous garden. Once more it proves that man's will, when employed for good, is the greatest earthly power in overcoming obstacles. But man's power employed for destruction, which is going against the laws of nature, is bound to frustrate its purpose, and that is one of the reasons that we could have perfect faith in the victorious issue of the war even during the Germans' drive toward Paris, and could feel sure that their destructive militarism could not possibly triumph.

I spoke at various meetings and the last evening of our stay in Los Angeles we were taken to Krotona, situated near Hollywood, where the moving-picture stars pose for wonderful films, and where both matter-of-fact and sentimental subjects are thrown on the screen.

We were told that the film companies possessed large plots of land in Hollywood, where they erected houses, palaces, villages, and cities for their “movies,” and tore them down again when other “settings” were needed.

“Our stars,” a Californian lady explained to us, “such as Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Rio Jim, Mary Pickford, and many others besides, are the kings and queens of Los Angeles and lower California, and we are very proud of them. Whenever they drive through the streets we always make 217 way for them. The other day one of our most celebrated movie actresses was invited by the general commanding X—camp, near San Diego, to pass the review with him, and she appeared on the scene dressed up in a wonderful uniform rather similar to that of a general, with however, certain feminine variations.”

“Are many films made at Hollywood?” I inquired.

“Yes, and nearly all the American films are produced in California on account of the mildness of the climate, which makes it possible to take them in all seasons. As you have probably heard, it is very difficult to pass the test and become a good moving-picture actress; all the girls here are crazy to become stars and millionaires in a few years. It is true their money is well earned, as it is very exhausting and often rather dangerous.”

“What are the special qualifications required in order to be a good moving-picture actress?” I asked.

“Above all,” answered my amiable informer, “you must have a straight nose. I am told that a turned-up nose ‘à la Roxelane,’ or a bumpy one, looks horrid on the screen, which enlarges every feature. Then if you are blond, the hair must be flaxen, for golden hair with much yellow turns black in the photographs. Secondly, a beautiful physique is required, but here I mean a ‘camera 218 attractive’ physique. Sometimes perfect beauties become very ugly and no one knows why. The camera is the most hopeless and unexpected instrument to deal with. It has its own particular fancies, and often without reason turns beauties into horrors, and semi-horrors into perfections. Thirdly, an actress must know how to act really well, how to ride, swim, drive, and cry prettily, with eyes wide-open and

the tears trembling on the tips of the eyelashes, to fall later one by one down the smooth cheeks. So you can realize how these qualifications narrow down the list of the elect!"

"I suppose you will be interested to hear," another lady joined in, "that in many film companies they have a special agent, who has traveled and seen much of the world, and whose mission it is to look to the exactitude of certain details. If the film represents a Chinese drama, this agent would have to correct any detail that might not be in absolute harmony with the manners and customs of Chinamen. Some weeks ago I saw a film beautifully played by Geraldine Farrar, and one of the scenes was supposed to be enacted at Monte Carlo, where I have spent many winters. I was much amused to see that Monte Carlo was represented with houses built in the American style and possessing any amount of fire escapes, which, however, are unknown in that part of the world. Such details as this evidently detract much from the likelihood 219 of the drama, and I realized how necessary it is for film companies to be guided by a man able to correct or prevent such mistakes from being made."

Krotona is the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in the United States, and I was asked to speak in their open-air theater which is situated on a hill with a lovely view. On the way that leads to the theater are houses inhabited by theosophists. A great impression of peace and harmony came over us as we passed through the gateway of this place, and the contrast with active Los Angeles and its environments was most impressive. One might have thought oneself transported to a distant country—perhaps to Thibet.

The Theosophical Society has its headquarters at Adyar in India, and it was founded in New York by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott in 1875. It is an unsectarian body of seekers after truth, striving to serve humanity on spiritual lines and, therefore, endeavoring to check materialism and revive religious tendency. Its three declared objects are:

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color.

2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science.

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3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

Mrs. Besant, who is the actual president of the society, in one of her lectures, “A Sketch of Theosophy,” says that two of the ideas to be grasped are: “first, the idea that man as a spiritual being can know God and develop the divine within himself; and secondly, that in each of the religions of the world there is a body of truths common to all the religions and those truths are called Theosophy.”

My sister was beginning to be anxious about my health, as the heat and the numerous speeches I delivered daily were thoroughly exhausting my strength. The people were so eager to hear the message I was bringing from France that I had not the heart to refuse to speak often, although I was now on the verge of a breakdown. Faced by this situation, we spoke to Mr. X—the chief of the Four Minute Men of Los Angeles, and decided that, instead of going by train to San Diego, we would go with him and his wife by motor-car —the fresh air and the lovely drive being certainly more restful. We were rejoicing at the prospect of this charming day spent amid wonderful scenery,—and then when we returned from Krotona at eleven o'clock in the evening the telephone-bell rang, and my sister heard a sharp and most decided, although feminine, voice ask:

“Is this the Countess de Bryas?”

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“I am her sister,” was the reply.

“And I am Captain Z—and want to speak to her.”

As usual my sister explained that I could not go to the telephone and asked if the message could be given to her. This is what followed:

“I am told that you are not arriving by the nine o'clock train to-morrow morning, but you must be in San Diego for the Women's Motor Corps Parade that we have organized for your arrival at the station!”

“I am very sorry,” my sister said, “but we will only arrive in time for the lecture, which is to be given at eight o'clock at the Isis Theatre!”

Then the voice, becoming more authoritative than ever, continued:

“The governor is coming purposely for this occasion and Admiral Y—, commanding the Pacific Coast, will be there to receive you. If you don't instantly promise to come by the nine o'clock train, I will come myself to see that you get into it, for the countess we must have dead or alive!”

Before such a threat, both being in an uncombative state of health, we decided not to resist, but to rise in the early morning. Then we hurriedly did our packing before retiring.

At seven o'clock the next morning my sister was called to the telephone by Mr. X—, who had been awakened at five o'clock—poor man!—by this 222 same female Captain Z—, who had driven all the way from Coronado Beach to Los Angeles, or, to be more precise, who had made her lieutenant, a young and pretty girl, drive all night in order to make sure of the capture of the French countess and her sister. She would not leave the telephone until Mr. X—had made the solemn promise to see us off by the nine o'clock train. Then she left Los Angeles, still driven by her lieutenant, whom she nearly killed by exhaustion, so as to be back in time for the famous parade. Mr. X—and his charming wife offered to accompany us to San Diego, and that thought cheered us up.

On leaving the telephone my sister saw peeping from under the door a piece of paper, which she picked up to find that it was no other than a torn hotel laundry paper, on the reverse of which were hastily written in pencil these words:

“Dear Countess.

“I will promise you anything for France and Belgium if only you take the 9 o'clock train.

“ Captain Z —.”

These words were certainly sufficient to make us go even to the ends of the world without even considering whether our strength would hold out until the result were attained. Then upheld by the thought of the good luck that was awaiting us, we took the train and found that it would start late, as it was waiting for another train on which the 223 Governor of California was traveling. The governor arrived and took his place in our Pullman where, once comfortably seated, he took a short nap, and so did we. After this rest Mr. X—, who had come with us, introduced to us the governor, whom we found perfectly charming, and we enjoyed our chat with him. He told us that he was making his campaign for the elections that were to take place two days later, and that he had been called for by the Women's Motor Corps Division of San Diego and was arriving without knowing the purpose of his journey. Mr. X—then explained that it was on our account that all these preparations were made, and a good-looking colonel of the regiment stationed near Coronado Beach said to us with a delightful smile:

“You will receive a royal reception!”

We felt most grateful for all that was done for the representatives of France, and for the spirit of love and admiration in which it was accomplished. It was certainly wonderful to feel that neither the ocean nor the continent itself, equal in size to that ocean separating

France from California, could stop the hearts of the people of two distant nations from going out one to another in fraternal love.

We finally reached San Diego and were received at the station by the Women's Motor Corps Division, all making the military salute in a solemn 224 and dignified attitude. As we descended to the platform a military band played the “Marseillaise.” We could see the astonished faces of the other travelers as they peeped out from the train windows, wondering for whom the masculine and feminine army of the Southern Pacific Coast had been mobilized.

At the station door we found three motor-cars waiting for us, in which we were to take place for the parade. In the first one were seated the governor and the colonel; then came our car, and after the third one were two huge military lorries with the military band still playing. In order that the music should keep in tune and that the unexpected jolts of the road should not make discordant notes we advanced at a tortoise-like pace, which gave the impression that we were following a hearse.

To reach Coronado Beach from San Diego you have to cross the bay, and we found that the admiral commanding the Pacific Coast had most amiably put his own lovely white craft at our disposal. So in this way we crossed over with our party and several members of the Motor Corps, among whom were the admiral's two pretty and attractive daughters.

On arriving at the Hotel del Coronado we were greeted by the admiral and his wife, and then taken to our rooms, where we were allowed to lunch alone and rest before the afternoon reception. Our 225 rooms looked out on a big verandah, where we decided to take our meal, as the view was lovely. My sister stepped out to admire it, and when I joined her I found her in tears and, pointing to the scene to the right, she said:

“This looks just like Pointe Sainte Barbe!”—a place at Saint-Jean-de-Luz that we are very fond of and where we have spent many happy winter months. This sight was too much for

my overwrought nerves, and I burst into tears, thinking of my country and of the unclouded days before te war.

In fact we were now so exhausted that our nerves were giving out, and simply to think of home and of our dear friends over there was sufficient to make the tears rise to our eyes. Even the sight of happy and healthy children broke our hearts when we thought of the sad and aged faces of the little ones of our destroyed regions, who had suffered from hunger and gone through such hardships that, poor mites, they had forgotten how to smile and how to play. In itself that thought was sufficient to make us feel that we must keep on despite our exhaustion at the time, in order to let the American nation know of the sufferings of our young generation.

Madame Tingley had kindly put her theater, called “Isis Theatre,” the most beautiful and the largest in San Diego, at my disposal that night, 226 and when the meeting was over she invited us to visit her school the next morning.

Never have I seen a more glorious setting for a school than the plot of land selected at Point Loma by Mrs. Tingley, who is the president of the “Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society.” It is situated on a peninsula eight miles long and from one to three miles wide. We were received in the Aryan Memorial Temple, a gorgeous building of a radiant pink hue, by two darling little tots of three and four years old, who came forward to greet us with bunches of flowers. Then we entered the temple and listened to a symposium enacted by the “youngest teachers in the world,” clad in white garments and wearing wreaths of flowers on their head. It was most amusing to watch those twenty or thirty little philosophers, whose ages ranged from three to perhaps sixteen, gravely arguing about the immortality of the soul and the necessity of mastering the mind and gradually controlling the inferior nature through the power of the will.

The school is a colony of about five hundred members, who have gathered there from all parts of the world, and where art, science, languages, philosophy, law, and horticulture are

taught. The architecture of the various buildings is extremely original and due to the talent of Mme. Tingley, who built them fifteen years ago in what was then a 227 desert where only sage-brush grew. The principal buildings are surmounted by huge domes of green and pink glass, and clustering around these temples are voluminous masses of palm-trees giving to the whole surrounding an appearance of gorgeousness, wealth, and material prosperity.

One of the most beautiful sights in California is the Greek Temple of Point Loma, built of white marble, where the Raja Yoga students play dramas. I imagine nothing can be more picturesque than to watch the actors seated on the steps or erect against the Doric pillars, through which, a little farther away beyond the cliffs, gleams the radiant blue Pacific.

The Californian climate seems to develop in the souls of its people a strong tendency toward spirituality and the search for divine wisdom. Numerous are the followers of all these various spiritual movements, about which we were given many pamphlets by zealous persons who hoped to convert us into active members of their own particular philosophical sect.

Here my thoughts reverted to Voltaire's witty, though perhaps exaggerated, words, “When two people talk together without understanding each other, then they are speaking philosophy, but when the one who is speaking does not understand what he himself is saying, then is he talking metaphysics.”

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CHAPTER XIX SAN FRANCISCO

THE servant problem over here is another difficult question to deal with, and it has become nearly impossible to find servants, and this to such an extent that we were asked in the majority of cities and towns through which we passed whether we could not send to the States some of our French and Belgian refugees as domestic help.

In the West the difficulties seemed even greater than in the East, and it very seriously complicated the home life. For instance, the cook is one of the nightmares of a household, as she generally lives “down town” in a room of her own, coming to the house only to prepare the meals. She has her private telephone in her room, and her employer is at the mercy of her call, as the following example will prove.

We were staying with some charming friends, at whose home we had arrived on the previous day. In the afternoon we were informed that their cook had telephoned that as she had prepared three consecutive meals she wanted a rest, and would not 229 come that evening to cook the dinner. So the only thing we could do was to go to a club, as no human power could make that cook budge.

On another occasion we were staying in the house of friends in quite another part of the States. We drove there late in the evening, and the next morning a well-intentioned and very young-looking maid thrust her head through the doorway and in a stentorian voice, which caused me to jump almost out of my chair, shouted:

“I say, you girls, if you need to have anything fixed up, just tell me, and I'll do it right away!”

In fact, we wonder whether the only way for the Americans to solve their servant question would not be in having, as has been proposed in England, a corporation of “domestic helpers” composed of men and women perfectly trained in special schools, who would go from house to house for a couple of hours, doing the service required. They would wear a distinctive uniform, which seems to have a certain attraction for Americans.

In the hotels we were told that the servants rarely remained more than an average of five years, as at the end of that time they generally chose another profession that they deemed less servile and more independent. For one of the strongest American characteristics is the longing to be one's own master, sufficiently free to exercise one's own initiative.

We left for San Francisco, for “Frisco,” as it is called by other States to the disgust of its inhabitants, and were received by most charming people at the station, and also by reporters and photographers. In getting into the motor-car we were informed that we were not to stay at the San Francis Hotel, where we had engaged rooms, but instead at the Palace Hotel.

“For all the hotels must have a chance,” explained Mrs. X—, who had come to greet us. “Your General Pau was staying last week at the San Francis on his way to Australia; that is why we have put you up at another hotel.”

The next morning my sister was called over the telephone by six or eight different photographers who were wanting us to sit at their studio; and also several reporters rung up to get appointments for interviews. We seemed to be duplicating our New. York mornings.

In no part of the States more than here did we hear so much of woman's suffrage. It is a question that seems to them of vital importance, and the women are indeed asserting themselves here fully, and playing an active part in public affairs.

American women have helped suppress alcohol and they will probably vote for the suppression of what many may look upon as the joys of life, tobacco, for instance, and even coffee. As they belong 231 to the weaker sex we may be prepared to find many an exaggeration in what they will decide as being prejudicial to the race. Their excuse is that they are thinking of the welfare of the future generations, and as an author remarked, “Through the very necessities of her being the woman subjugates the interests of the present to the welfare of lives unborn.”

I was very much interested in San Francisco and along the Pacific Coast in studying the difference of mentality in the Easterner and the Westerner.

“In the West,” a lady explained to us, “we are tempted to believe that old families are like potatoes, the best part of them underground.”

“Do you mean by that,” I asked, “that you judge every man entirely on his own merits?”

“Yes,” she answered, “the self-made man is the type we admire most. As you already know, it is generally those of the strongest character in their class that emigrate from Europe to America each year. Those people are nearly always superior to their kind in daring, audacity, self-confidence, and initiative. In the same way the strongest and the more adventurous characters in the East are precisely those that emigrate and settle in the West of the United States. The quality that we Americans appreciate most in a person is strength of character, whereas in France, I suppose, your admiration goes 232 more willingly to the man who is cultured and refined, and belongs to the intellectual elite of your country.”

Despite this assertion, however, I discovered that in the West as well as in the East, quite a number of families were not far from thinking that their “underground ancestors” were worth acknowledging when they happened to be old grandees of the past.

“Many descendants of the kings of France and England have emigrated to America,” a delightful and witty old lady I met in California explained to me. “Here many people claim descent from William the Conqueror, Pépin le Bref, Hugues Capet, a James of Scotland, or a Henry of England. Whereas,” continued she, “of course, I know that in Europe such distinction generally comes only from morganatic marriages or from an illegitimate branch of a royal family. I am naturally not including in this classification reigning families and their branches.”

“May I ask you whether you happen yourself to be a descendant of one of such kings?” I inquired, much interested.

“Yes,” she answered, “and I will explain to you my descent from William. I call him just ‘William’ in an intimate way, as he belongs to my family.” She added, with the wickedest look of fun in her bright eyes: “People are too funny, 233 and you have, I dare say, come across any number of royal descendants in America! As soon as a man of the progressive style makes a fortune and gets into the swim, he at once acquires ancestors; all he has to do is to knock at the door of one of the several societies specially equipped with a rare assortment of old celebrities for him to choose from. But he generally makes the mistake of selecting the most prominent old king he can lay hands upon. Now I want to be perfectly fair; there do exist some old colonial families here in California, but specially in the East and the South, descended from very good old stock, and naturally it is not of these that I am speaking. I do not pretend at all myself, to be descended from old William, and if it amuses you to look at it, here is my family tree worked out for my special benefit by one of the above-mentioned societies.”

And I read something to this effect:

“William the Conqueror. Edwige of Brabant. Count of Normandy. Brunhild. Baron of Hastings. Chevalier d'Artaguès. Lucy Mincepie. Jacob Soshort. Theresa Windpipe. 234 Martin Windpipe. Hannibal Windpipe.”

And finally the name of my hostess's father.

San Francisco is a most beautiful city, with a unique situation on the Pacific Ocean and the San Francisco Bay separated by the famous Golden Gate. It is certainly impossible to imagine that only twelve years ago the town was nearly completely destroyed by what it is considered tactful to call the “great fire,” and the prosperity of the city to-day is such that foreigners cannot help being filled with the most sincere admiration for the dauntless energy of its citizens, who fearlessly rebuilt it within a few years.

One of the greatest curiosities of San Francisco is the Chinese Quarter, with its 10,000 inhabitants, and we were escorted there one night by a charming member of our reception committee, a clever woman lawyer, and four detectives in civilian clothes.

We entered a mysterious-looking house, and waded along narrow and ill-smelling corridors. As we passed along, Chinese heads cautiously peeped out from each door, like culprits who are afraid of being caught in committing illicit acts. Finally we stopped, and a detective knocked loudly at one of the doors. An old Chinaman opened it, and stared at us with a frightened look. We all managed to squeeze into the tiny room, and the old 235 man retired to his couch of Chinese matting, from which he had risen at our knocking.

“We want to see you smoke,” said one of the detectives.

“No got opium,” answered the Chinaman, in broken English.

Then the other detectives began hunting around the room, searching in vain for the prohibited drug.

“This old man,” the woman lawyer explained to us, “was arrested lately, and appeared in court charged with opium-smoking, but I pleaded his cause, and obtained from the authorities permission for him to be allowed to use the drug on account of his great age and the fact that if he abstained from this life-long habit, he would certainly die. You see that in spite of the severity of our laws we are very humane in their application.”

“We will come back in an hour,” said the head detective to the Chinaman, “and by that time you must find opium, as we have promised these French ladies they shall see you smoke. We guarantee that no harm will be done to you.”

We were glad to get away from the awful atmosphere of that room and its weird Asiatic smell.

As we walked along the corridors we stopped before another door, on which the words “Hip Sing Tong” were written. We entered, and found a lovely room filled with Chinese works of art.

“This is the headquarters of one of the innumerable 236 secret societies of Chinatown,” we were informed by a detective in our party. “Secret societies are often dens, in which murders are planned and crimes cleverly elaborated. Despite a careful scrutiny exercised by the police, assassinations are frequent in Chinatown, where a complicated system of vengeance is carried on by families who have to avenge their honor when one of their own has been murdered by killing the criminal or a member of his family.”

After that we visited a joss house or a sanctuary, where incense rises like a perpetual adoration in front of curious divinities carved in wood. Then we were shown a gambling-den that the police had discovered only the previous week, and that reminded me of the “Mysteries of New York,” a famous film that obtained great success in France during the war.

“This den,” one of our guides explained, “is composed of several rooms, which I will show you, and which have neither windows nor visible doors. These rooms are situated in the rear of a Chinese bar or small restaurant, of which the tenants have now been arrested, and for a long time we did not suspect that a gambling-house was hidden away behind this innocent-looking shop.”

Indeed, we found that the only means of access to this suite of rooms was through a series of doors so cleverly concealed in the wooden walls that not 237 the slightest aperture was visible when they were closed. They could only be opened by a string pulled from the outside of the first room. As we came out into the street again we saw a group of Chinamen watching the detectives with anxious looks. Evidently their consciences were not altogether free from some secret alarm.

We returned to the house that we had first visited, and found our old Chinaman still reclining on his couch. After much coaxing he ended by producing his opium, a small heap of brownish stuff spread out on a doubled-up playing-card.

“They always use playing-cards to carry their opium about in,” the lawyer told us, “because one side is slippery, and they can get it off easily with their needle without having bits of paper sticking to it.”

The old man had taken out his needle, and with amazing dexterity of fingers he heated the little ball and thrust it into his long pipe. Then he lay down flat on his back and blew a few puffs. After a few moments he began again, and the atmosphere of the room was soon saturated with a heavy, sickening smell.

“Will he doze off into blissful dreams?” I inquired.

“Oh, no,” answered the lawyer. “This man is so intoxicated that no amount of opium could ever produce that effect on him. That is precisely the 238 danger of the drug. All those who smoke it regularly get accustomed to it or rather immune from its poisonous influence, and in order to obtain a reaction on their nervous system, they are progressively led into augmenting the dose, with the result that they soon lose all healthy and natural energy and become useless and unreliable members of society.”

As we emerged into the street a curious noise attracted our attention, somewhat like the mixture of a small jazz-band playing false notes, a company of cats caterwauling, and a shrill feminine voice singing chromatic scales out of tune. It was a Chinese concert being performed in an adjoining building. We hurriedly mounted the stairs and found ourselves in a room facing five men and one woman, the chromatic-scale soloist, striving to master gruesome instruments on which they were playing with desperate energy. No public was there to listen or encourage them, and they were evidently disporting themselves for their own pleasure—and what a pleasure! They turned around as we entered and shot fierce

glances at us, but when they recognized our four detectives, they quickly exchanged looks and resumed their musical efforts.

I remember reading somewhere that when the tower of Babel was abandoned God left one stone standing to represent music, the universal language that all men would in the future understand. This 239 legend sounds very poetic, but in listening to Chinese music I realized that it is open to criticism. For, indeed, this strange music represented nothing to our minds; it did not appeal to our emotions in the slightest degree; it seemed to our unaccustomed ears simply noise. Hindu music, the chant of the muezzin in the mosques of Egypt and Constantinople, the nasal and monotonous singing of the dervish in Asia Minor, have never done other than arouse my curiosity; they have failed to open up new vistas to my imagination.

This brought to my recollection the story of the Persian shah who on an official visit to Paris a number of years ago was taken to the opera to hear Gounod's “Faust.” His Majesty sat very quietly through the first act, and when asked how he had appreciated French music declared that he had enjoyed one part of it intensely and that he wanted to hear it again. So the singers repeated the waltz and chorus of the finale. “No, no,” said the shah; “it was before that.” The singers went through the duo. “No, no; it was before that too.” Finally it was discovered that what had appealed so strongly to his Majesty's musical taste was the tuning of the instruments.

We ended the evening in a chop suey, or Chinese restaurant, very similar to those of New York, where we ate a horrible mash of every description of wild and domestic animal cut up into tiny slices, 240 and long thin herbs looking like green worms. All this was served in bowls, and we tried to pick up the food with two sticks, which one is supposed to use with the right hand only. This was the most amusing part of the meal, as we were all frightfully clumsy at this novel performance. Sitting next to our table was a Chinaman, and we were speechless at his dexterity. He leaned over the bowl and literally threw the food into his

mouth without ever stopping, the little sticks meanwhile beating a rapid cadence up and down. It was ghastly to look at.

Almost every day all through my tour I spoke at luncheon and often at dinner-parties in the innumerable clubs that flourish in American cities. I will now confess that there is nothing I love so truly in this world as speaking in public. This has certainly given me much of the greatest joy I have ever experienced, but yet I must admit that I never got reconciled to the fact of having to make speeches immediately after a meal. I almost entirely gave up eating at luncheon; those who introduced me to the public invariably got nervous about beginning as rapidly as possible in order to allow me more time in which to expose my ideas, and generally I had barely nibbled at a few dishes when they would ask me to get up and talk.

“Would you mind explaining to me,” I inquired of ne of my amiable neighbors at the Common-wealth 241 Club in San Francisco, “how it is that men never lunch with their wives in America?”

“Our work makes it impossible for us to go home in the middle of the day!” he answered, with an astonished smile at the naïveté of my question.

“Yes, American men say so, but my own experience in this country leads me to the conclusion that many women don't lunch at home, either. Every day at noon I lunch myself at a club, and the public that I address afterward is composed either exclusively of women or exclusively of men. I presume, therefore, that it is more a matter of custom and choice rather than an actual impossibility. Otherwise a greater number of mixed clubs would be organized in your cities, where husbands and wives might often lunch together.”

“Your remark is perfectly true,” my neighbor answered, “but I can refute it with two statements. Firstly, business men are often so absorbed in their work that they cannot afford more than fifteen minutes for their lunch. Secondly, business transactions are constantly carried on in these various clubs, and they afford business men the opportunity

of meeting and talking in a more intimate way to other people who may be useful to them in their own affairs."

"Will you allow me to express a personal opinion that may differ somewhat from yours?" I asked. "Each time that I have been asked to speak at a 242 business-men's luncheon, I have always been invited for noon and have never been free before two o'clock and generally two-thirty. You will in all probability answer that this fact constitutes somewhat of an exception, although since the war such speeches have frequently been made at clubs several times a week, and they seemingly have a tendency to be on the increase. I do not doubt, however, that your reasoning is based on more solid ground than mine, and that these luncheons arise from the fact that in the beginning, when the men of the country created in the desert those marvelous oases that are your cities, they left their homes in the morning, returning only at night after having spent the entire day working hard at organizing a civilized condition of life; their social instinct, however, making them desire to gather together in each other's company during the midday meal. Do you not think that this is probably the origin of your 'business-men's luncheons'? By degrees, as the conditions of life became more firmly established, the women also sallied forth from their homes and came into town in the daytime, and they in their turn found their social instinct led them to organize 'women's clubs. This is probably the origin of the feminine movement in your country. When they gathered, they soon realized the force of their numbers and their power. Allow me also to add," I concluded, "that I have met a far greater 243 number of happy married couples in America than elsewhere in this world, and probably this independent manner of living their lives contributes much toward making American husbands and wives meet with renewed pleasure when their work is over, and then they can talk over the various interesting episodes of their everyday lives."

The largest audience I addressed in America was at Berkeley, on the opposite bank of San Francisco Bay, in the wonderful Hearst Greek Theatre, which can seat 10,000 people. This theatre is an open-air one, and the accoustic properties are such that it is not necessary to make any superhuman effort to be heard by the entire audience, as I often

had to do when I talked out-of-doors in factories, with machines and engines puffing loudly at my side.

Nothing, indeed, seemed more curious to me than to watch the public right back in the last rows laughing heartily when I ventured a few jokes, and jokes have necessarily to be said almost in an undertone, and not as the teller of the comic story who “does not slur the nub,” as Mark Twain indignantly explains in “How to tell a Story,” “but shouts it at you—every time. All of which is very depressing, and makes one want to renounce joking and lead a better life.

This meeting, like nearly all those we attended, opened with a musical program that never varied much, and as one of my fellow-countrymen who was 244 sent on a French official war-mission to America remarked to me one day:

“After ten months in the United States, and any amount of official banquets, I have ended by associating in my mind the ‘Marseillaise’ with the entrée, ‘God Save the King’ with the roast, and the ‘Star-Spangled Banner’ with the asparagus.”

When the address was finished a great part of the audience advanced, and we shook hands with them, as we did each day with several thousands of people who greeted us in all the generosity of their great enthusiasm, expressing in this way their sympathy and love for our country.

I remember in Berkeley one young woman and her two darling little children, who stood watching us a long while with big, wondering eyes.

“My grandmother,” she said, “shook hands with La Fayette when he was in America. And to-day I have brought my children with me so that they should meet representatives of the country that we love and admire, the country of La Fayette.”

As we kissed these dear little ones our hearts went out to the children of America, who looked upon us as bringing over to them some of the soul and spirit of what they knew was invincible France.

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CHAPTER XX PUGET SOUND

UNTIL we reached San Francisco we had the impression of being similar to two aërolites whirled through space at a tremendous rate, to be arrested, however, before complete annihilation.

After this had been going on for some time we suddenly found ourselves compelled to ask for a week's rest, in order to “be fit” for carrying out the rest of the schedule. But the answer came from Washington that meetings were organized as far as Seattle on September 5, and could not be canceled.

On getting this news my sister realized the absolute impossibility of our fulfilling the whole tour as planned if we ever wished our family to see us again in the flesh, and so she sent the following telegram to the Committee on Public Information:

“My sister's strength not equal to holding out in spite of her willingness to do the work. Incapable of going on, although meetings reduced to two a day. Thoroughly exhausted and needs several 246 weeks' rest. So sorry but must give up tour after Seattle. Sincerest regrets.”

And may we suggest here that much wasted energy would be saved for speakers touring the States if in each city or town the meetings were limited to one or two big gatherings, which the members of all the various organizations of the locality should attend.

We left California for Oregon, and after thirty-four hours of traveling reached Portland, the lovely city of roses, where among many other interesting experiences I addressed on

the very evening of my arrival fifteen hundred workmen composing the night shift of the Smith, Grant, Porter Shipyard. It was truly a curious sight to see this crowd of enthusiastic laborers clustering around the wooden table on which I stood in the open air talking to them of what was going on six thousand miles away. The night was a moonless one, and our out-of-door gathering was lit by a few electric lamps, which cast fantastic shadows over the whole scene—a scene strange enough to tempt a painter to represent one of the unexpected side-lights of the war.

The next day we motored to the famous Columbia River Gorge and the Multnomah Falls, which are among the most beautiful sights in America. It was a very sunny day, and a small discussion arose as to whether we should drive there with the top of 247 the car up or down—a somewhat vexed problem to solve, when feminine and masculine wishes are at stake.

“I have often told my son,” a clever lady in our party explained to us, “that when he has a girl to drive out whom he is particularly anxious to please, he should always be careful to consider the delicate question of putting the top down or up. Don't ask her, is my formula, but look at the skin of her neck and chest. If it is a beautiful mahogany color, don't hesitate; put the top down; she does not mind the sun and the wind. But if the skin is peerlessly white and immaculate, by all means put it up, and she will credit you with good looks, a clever brain, and charming manners.”

Seattle is another lovely city situated on the Puget Sound in most beautiful surroundings. From there passengers sail to Vancouver and thence to Alaska. Here we naturally heard many Alaskan stories and adventures, which thrilled us with delight. Stories about the discovery of gold in the Klondike, about the inhabitants of Nome and other towns shut in as they are for six months of the year by snow, with no communication with the rest of the world except through the couriers who travel there in sleds driven by the huskies so vividly described by Jack London.

The inhabitants of Seattle never seem to be embarrassed 248 about carrying out even the most daring of schemes.

“Seattle is built on a series of hills,” we were informed by one of our charming cousins, who has settled there.“One of these particularly impeded our municipal traffic, as the town spread out in all directions; so with the help of hydraulic machines we just sliced the hill right off, and sent it tumbling to the banks of the sound, producing in this way a piece of firm land on the shore, where shipyards have been built since the war.”

On the very day after our arrival we were given another proof of the irresistible force of water, which caused us to reflect on the instability of life in new countries. The three-story Russell Hotel and the personal effects of its seventy-nine occupants were totally destroyed by an automobile bumping into a street hydrant.

One of the Seattle papers gave the following account of how it had happened, and certainly accidents are often reproduced on films, to the great delight of the public, which are far less freakish than this one:

The collapsing of the Russell was due to an automobile accident on the corner in front of it. The driver of a delivery truck for the Three Girls' Bakery attempted to avoid a collision with another automobile, and swerved his machine sharply to one side. It struck the fire plug on the corner and snapped it off. A geyser of water shot into the air a distance of 249 seventy-five feet, spraying over a large number of persons who were passing at the time, and drenching them before they could clear out of its radius. A number of the windows in the Russell house were open, and the water poured through these. Several of the occupants were soaked through before they succeeded in closing the windows. The water from the broken plug settled in the hollow under the building, in a great pool and undermined its foundation.

Every room in the house was occupied and most of the tenants were in their rooms when the building began to settle. A dozen policemen went to the door of each one of the forty-two rooms and notified the occupants to leave at once. When no response was received, doors were broken open. Many of the roomers wanted to stop to gather up personal effects and in some instances the police were compelled to forcibly eject the occupant. The last of the tenants were out of the building but a few minutes, when the entire hotel collapsed with a roar that was heard for blocks.

When we visited the scene of the accident we found that the wrecked hotel had dwindled into a small heap of wooden dèbris, and we wondered how in the world this frame building ever housed seventy-nine people.

An original and unique way of helping his country during the war was conceived by an American acrobat surnamed the Human Fly, whom we saw in Seattle. This name was earned from the type of performance he gave, which consisted in attaining the roofs of the highest hotels, not by the usual means of the elevators, but by the uncommon way of climbing up the outside of the buildings.

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It was truly impressive to see this human fly crawling, so to speak, from stone to stone, from window to window, from floor to floor, growing smaller and smaller to the spectator's view until the living black spot reached the summit. Then when the dangerous task was accomplished cheers upon cheers arose from the delighted public, and contributions were enthusiastically rained in for the Red Cross.

I was always “introduced” to the public whenever I spoke in America, and sometimes these “introductions” were a source of infinite amusement and interest to me, as they varied from the loftiest and most dignified style, to the most sentimental or confidential one. But in all cases they always were what introductions are supposed to be, extremely flattering, and I remember with a certain emotion the chairman of one of the organizations in a town on

the Pacific coast, who was so carried away by his subject plus his enthusiasm, that he declared that there were at present five hundred thousand Joans of Arc in France, and that two of them had brought the message of “For the Right” to America, and then he turned towards my sister and myself, bowing exquisitely.

The only trait of resemblance I could possibly think of between our national heroine and myself is that I heard as she did a voice urging me to do my duty, but in my case it was only the voice of my 251 friend through the telephone sending me to America. Whereas Joan, in the fields where she was keeping her sheep near her native village of Domremy in Lorraine, heard the Archangel Michael saying to her in sweet tones: “Fear not, Joan, thou hast been chosen by the King of Heaven to accomplish great deeds and restore happiness to France. Clothe thyself in man's attire, arm thyself, and thou shalt become the leader of the War.”

I can now imagine an Alaskan Joan of Are listening to “The Call *In* the Wild”; but instead of the mellow voice of the archangel, I suppose the message would be conveyed to her in the metallic trumpet sounds of a megaphone.

“I bet this don't phase you, Jane! Be a brick. Camouflage yourself as a Yank, quit my country, ride a tank, lead my ‘Khaki Devils’ over the top, and lick the kaiser!”

I trust my readers will approve of the up-to-date translation.

Americans are such remarkably practical people that we spent our time marveling at their ingenuity. For instance, one of the Seattle papers, called the *Times* , originated a way of keeping the public constantly informed of the latest war news. A series of whistle signals were the means of conveying the news.

One Long Blast. Whistle at 11:59 A. M. daily. 252 Time ball about to drop, announcing it to be exactly noon.

Two Long Blasts. At frequent intervals. Allied forces making new gains.

Four Long Blasts. At frequent intervals. American forces are driving the Germans.

Five Short Blasts. At frequent intervals. Germany sues for peace.

In many towns of the United States one long blast was also heard at midday, announcing the noon meditation. And in Seattle as well as in Washington, D. C., I saw people stop suddenly and bow their heads in devotion, praying with all their hearts for the deliverance of the world and that victory be granted to the Allies. This spiritual movement in America was largely due to the International Association of Rotary Clubs, which is a democratic organization of business and professional men numbering 39,000 members and possessing 524 clubs.

I do not doubt that these heartfelt prayers contributed enormously toward the triumph of the forces of good, because I believe that no words were ever more true than those of Christ when He said, “Ask and it shall be given you.”

Before we left Seattle we visited a wonderful ranch, where the breeding of cattle is carried out on a large scale.

The cows on this ranch are said to be happy 253 cows, and therefore they give better and more milk than discontented ones. They are treated like princesses in fairy tales, get the best of food, consisting partly of alfalfa-grass, are massaged and shower-bathed, and are never allowed to get wet feet. Their guardians are sympathetic young men with gentle dispositions, who whisper sweet things into their ears whilst they are being milked, and who tend them with as much care as delicate babies. We were specially filled with admiration at the results of such good treatment. One of these contented and pedigreed cows, called Adventuress Canary (they nearly all have most honorable and generally prize parents), gave out as much as 409.7 quarts of milk in seven days, or 58.5 quarts per day.

As we left the barn my sister whispered to me:

“Americans really have quaint ideas! If I had a well-intentioned cow who actually gave out daily an ocean of milk for me like this one does, I wouldn't spoil her reputation by calling her ‘Adventuress Canary,’ unless this name can be satisfactorily explained in the pedigree book!”

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CHAPTER XXI VERS LA FRANCE

“ YELLOWSTONE PARK is only a two-days' journey from here, and you cannot leave America without going to see that marvellous place,” said our Seattle cousins.

After all, what were distances for us now that we had already covered so many miles, and if we did not go we should always regret having missed the opportunity. So we left for Livingston, from which place we were to get a train for Gardiner, one of the entrances to the park.

Livingston is a little town of 2,800 inhabitants, where we arrived unknown, the first time such a thing had happened to us since landing in the States. So we spent the night hoping to “take things easy,” as our train did not leave until 9:30 the next morning.

But alas! it seems one can never live in peace, for we were awakened as usual by the telephone in the early morning, and my sister had to attend to it.

“Hello!” I heard her say, and then she turned around with an amused expression. “Six o'clock! 255 That is what I have just been told. The porter has certainly wakened up the wrong people, for we had never asked to be called at this early hour.”

This made us think of the story of the man who on getting into a train at night said to the porter:

“Wake me up to-morrow morning at five o'clock in time to get out at X—. I warn you that I sleep very soundly and only wake with a struggle. I will probably swear and kick and be in a fury, but don't mind, simply turn me out on the platform, and you'll get a good tip.”

Next morning the traveler woke up without being called, and on looking at his watch discovered that it was seven o'clock. His rage was great on realizing that he had missed the town where very important business was awaiting him. Rushing up to the porter he shook him by the shoulder, using the worst of language.

The porter looked at him impassively, and when his rage was over, said calmly:

“Well, man, you're some swearer, but you're nothing like the man I turned out at X—!”

When later we went down to pay our hotel bill they would not take a check, and we had to part with nearly all our change. Rather worried and wondering what we should do in the park if they, too, refused our checks, we set out for the station to find the train already there and that we had but six minutes before its departure. So we asked 256 whether there was a bank near, and when we were informed that it was at the end of the street, we left our hand-luggage on the platform, rushed out of the station, and ran to the building.

“Have you got any papers, a letter, an envelop addressed in your name, or a visiting-card, proving your identity?” asked the cashier.

We had left everything at the station, and had certainly not sufficient time to run back to fetch the required papers. Notwithstanding this lack of proof, that most obliging of bankers cashed our check, and even the train had most courteously waited for us, which caused it to leave one minute late.

On descending from the train at our destination, we found a touring-car in which we took place with other passengers, and which drove us to “Mammoth Hot Springs,” where we spent the first night. On account of the war the hotels had not been opened, in order to

economize fuel, and so we lived in tents, which were comfortably organized, some being for two people, and others, smaller, for a single person.

The guests were waited on by young university people, who found in this way a remunerative means of visiting the park and spending their holidays out of town.

On the second day we were taken to Old Faithful Camp, where we also spent a night. It gets its 257 name from one of the geysers, which since the discovery of the park by the Washburne Expedition and probably during centuries before has regularly shot its waters up into the air 170 feet high every sixty-five minutes, without ever disappointing the tourist.

What if Old Faithful were one day unfaithful, and missed one or two of his shows; what publicity he would make for himself, and how specially interesting he would become. But, alas! one is sure of him, and watch in hand, one waits for his punctual performance.

Besides that geyser there are hundreds of others to be seen; some are active every day; others, like the Giant, at intervals of nearly a fortnight or, like the Lioness, only once every two years. One of them, the Excelsior, is the lazy one of the company, and has not performed since 1888; but what a show! It would rise to nearly 300 feet for duration of half an hour.

One of our American friends, who is a remarkable ventriloquist, told me that when he was visiting Yellowstone Park lately he remembered the story of some unfortunate lady who nine years ago fell into one of the boiling wells, as she imprudently was walking backward in order to get a better view of “Castle Cone,” in eruption at that moment.

My friend, after having narrated this tragic incident 258 to the tourists who were visiting the park with him, walked to the edge of the pool where the body of the victim had disappeared, never to be seen again, and in an authoritative voice asked:

“Are you there, Madam? If you are, I conjure you to speak to us.”

A few seconds elapsed, and suddenly from the very depths of the earth a feeble voice answered:

“Yes, I am here, alone for nine years and bored to death. Thank you for remembering me!”

The tourists were seized with terror!

The great thrill of the journey is to live among the wild bears that wander in perfect liberty in the park. It is on the third day that one gets a vague idea of the feeling of the tamer when left face to face with wild beasts. Our first precaution was to inquire whether the bears were dangerous; to this they answered:

“Oh, no! Only when they are hungry!”

“But do they let you know when they are about to feel like that?” was our natural question.

So after all, here we were five thousand miles away from our parents, taking our first pleasure trip in the States, and risking another danger equal to that of the submarines, with the difference that our people at home were unaware of this new proof of our courage.

Before retiring to our tent, we were shown a neighboring one, torn to pieces the previous night 259 by a huge bear who had evidently missed a meal. The innocent inhabitant of this tent had left a few chocolates on her table, and the bear, attracted by the smell of the delicious sweets, simply tore down the whole place, and in a twinkling the chocolates disappeared. The lady herself, luckily, was away at that sensational moment.

We were kindly shown this disastrous sight as a forewarning, and it made us think how happy passengers are to be spared the sight of a torpedoed vessel before crossing the Atlantic.

However, that night fraught with danger was spent without any incident, and we considered ourselves lucky at being out of the way of the reporters, who would once more

have written up about the unfortunate French ladies, who had “systematically missed all the dangers of Yellowstone Park.”

On leaving our tent we met a lady whose dress sleeve had been torn off as the result of her kindheartedness toward a bear she had tried to feed with candy. He took the sweet, but made an effort to get a little extra nourishment by appropriating a part of the arm that held it out to him.

Later in the afternoon my sister and I strolled out for a walk to the cañon, and as we were quietly walking along and enjoying the peacefulness of the scene, a huge black bear suddenly appeared, standing still in the middle of the road and gazing at us with tremendous eyes.

“Is he hungry and looking for food?” was our exclamation.

Then unable to get any answer we turned rapidly away and fled for our lives.

After our five-days' holiday at Yellowstone Park we went directly to Philadelphia, to stay with cousins of ours whom we dearly love and with whom we knew we would be able to enjoy a thorough rest.

Our journey back lasted three days, and one morning in the dining-car as we were lunching, we found ourselves seated at a table with an old lady and her unmarried, middle-aged daughter, what we in France call “an advanced young girl.” They both seemed to be unusually excited, and the old lady felt compelled to speak to us.

“I must tell you, we are so thrilled by a young woman sitting in our car, who has just volunteered in the Y. M. C. A. to go to France and sing for the soldiers.”

“Yes,” added the daughter, “in order to go and sing to our boys she leaves at home her two small babies and her crippled mother. Is n't this simply splendid?”

“How very interesting!” were the only words we found to reply to our enthusiastic neighbors, and our thoughts went out to the poor babies and the invalid mother remaining helplessly at home, without the one who was probably the sunshine 261 and happiness of their lives. And once more we realized that the daily accomplishment of what may be called a dull and tedious duty may certainly be more deserving and harder to accomplish than the more exciting deeds that bring upon one the praise and admiration of the public.

We did not mention a word of our own experiences “over there,” as we felt that these two patriotic and enthusiastic American women would evidently not have let us part without having had a very long and detailed conversation, which we certainly no longer had the strength to endure.

So it was after our non-enthusiastic response and upon hearing us speak a foreign language that was none other than French, we heard the spinster say to her mother, with a suspicious glance in her eye:

“I think they're German. They're speaking in German!”

We had luckily ended our meal, and rushed back to our seats, into which we dropped, shrieking with laughter.

In Philadelphia we found that influenza was spreading its deathly germs over the city, and the people seemed rather frightened at its terrible effects. Nevertheless, it was nothing to compare with the death-rate in Washington, where churches, theaters, moving-picture shows were closed to avoid contagion.

In the streets we saw several women going about with gauze masks covering their faces. Coughing was prohibited, contact with sneezers was to be absolutely avoided, and if you were caught doing any such terrible things, you were looked upon as dangerous, and would have more backs than faces to contemplate.

People were dying like flies, and as the doctors and nurses had left for France in great numbers, the civilian population could not get proper care. The mortality was such that the dead could not be properly buried, owing to the lack of coffins and, also, to the insufficient number of undertakers.

I remember talking on this subject to one of the members of the French High Commission, who told us that three weeks previously he had sold one of his horses to a public undertaker in Washington, who had then said to him:

“I have not got the means of paying you now in cash,” and so other arrangements had been made.

“Since this morning,” said our friend, “I am in possession of a check amounting to the total price of the horse.”

The public undertaker had evidently never before been kept so busy, and was doing wonderful business. And so one can once more say that “Ill blows the wind which profits nobody.”

It was in Washington, quite at the end of our 263 stay in America, that we noticed for the first time one of the novel fads much in honor there.

We happened to meet a friend who had his face all bandaged up, and we immediately inquired with solicitude about his health.

“Oh, I have spent several days at a remarkable dentist's,” he replied. “He has unburdened me of all my teeth.”

“Why?” we asked in astonishment. “Were they, then, in such a bad condition?”

“On the contrary,” he answered, “they were perfectly healthy, but I am told that this treatment will cure me of my rheumatism.”

And when we inquired from other friends about this strange cure, we learned that “unburdened jaws” for rheumatismal cures were by no means infrequent.

We had noticed how many lovely American women “unburden” their eyebrows, which is, after all, a very becoming fashion, makes the eye appear larger and gives more height to its setting, but we could not be made to believe that having one's teeth pulled out ever would be as esthetic a fad as the other one, even if it preserved the toothless ones from rheumatism.

Before leaving Washington we asked to be presented to Mrs. Wilson, and our Ambassadress took us personally, with a cousin of ours, widow of a former American Ambassador to London and Secretary 264 of State, to pay our visit at the White House, where we were received by the President's wife with a simplicity not devoid of grandeur.

Mrs. Wilson was attired in a lovely gray charmeuse dress, and her beauty, her charm of manners, perhaps, also, her winsome smile, and fascinating, communicative laugh, contributed to win our hearts instantaneously. She kindly inquired about our impressions of the United States, and we were happy to tell her all about the touching manifestations toward our dear, beloved country, and also how in many towns we had been received as if France itself had come over to greet America.

A farewell dinner was given for us at the French Embassy, and at the French High Commission, and a few days later, at the end of October, we sailed from New York on

the Rochambeau, with Miss Wilson, who was giving her talent to the service of a patriotic cause, and going to France to sing in the camps.

It was with true emotion that we saw the giant sky-scrapers disappear beyond the horizon, and a feeling almost of sadness crept over us as we left these hospitable shores where we had had the privilege of living wonderful hours.

After six-months' sojourn in the States we can affirm that we sincerely love the American nation. It was with that feeling in our hearts that we went 265 over, and we hope we may have helped, though but in a small measure, to strengthen the bond of friendship and of love that must forever unite these two sister nations.

It is to La Fayette Americans and French are indebted for the extraordinary support his noble deeds of the past gave in counteracting the pro-German campaign, and setting forth the cause of the Allies.

La Fayette had fought to help the United States to gain her independence, and the memory of his deeds awakened in the Americans the same generous impulse that had prompted those actions, and it also aroused their sympathy for the oppressed nations struggling to reconquer their own independence. Such was the spirit that animated the people of the United States when, side by side with the Allies, they fought for the sublime ideal of winning liberty for the whole world.

Our voyage lasted a fortnight, and once more it was accomplished “without even a peek of a submarine!” I will always keep in memory the last day of our crossing, as we stood on the gangway and gazed at a quite unforgetable sight. Below us on the steerage deck were gathered the eight hundred American warriors the *Rochambeau* was bearing in her flanks, all khaki-clad, and with the new life-belt, which is slipped over the head and 266 adjusted like a waistcoat. It has a padded collaret, as if it were a democratic reminiscence of the Renaissance costume.

In their midst stood Miss Wilson in her Y. M. C. A. uniform, with her two traveling companions at her side, one of them, Mr. X—, singing with her, and his wife accompanying the artists on a miniature piano. The notes of the beautiful melodies rang out clearly through the bright and serene atmosphere; on the sea scarcely a ripple ruffled the smooth surface. Then I heard Miss Wilson's melodious voice calling to the soldiers:

“Boys! Let's all sing ‘There's a Long Long Trail.’”

And as hundreds of voices broke forth, singing the old war song, throwing out over the wide ocean the inspiring words, we suddenly caught a glimpse of land, just a darker line on the horizon, rising imperceptibly into the sky as we approached. One word arose to our lips, which we repeated over and over again, as if each time it made the atmosphere around us grow more lovable and exquisite.

“France! France!” we all cried.

That night we reached the entrance to the Gironde River, where a special envoy from General Pershing came on deck to greet Miss Wilson. His whole countenance radiated a joy that was the herald of good news, and as he approached the little group where we stood with the President's

daughter, gazing into the clear night, and watching the bright stars overhead, he brought his heels together with a sharp click and made the military salute.

“Welcome to France!” he said with a glad ring in his voice. And then, very slowly, as if the better to make us realize the importance of the news of which he was the messenger, he announced, “In three days the armistice will be signed!”

And suddenly into my mind came Longfellow's poem, the words then seeming to me almost prophetic:

A wind came up out of the sea, And said, “O mists, make room for me.”

It hailed the ships and cried, “Sail on, Ye mariners, the night is gone.”

And hurried landward far away, Crying, “Awake! it is the day.”

It said unto the forest, “Shout! Hang all your leafy banners out!”

It touched the wood-bird's folded wing, And said, “O bird, awake and sing.”

And o'er the farms, “O chanticleer, Your clarion blow; the day is near.”

It whispered to the fields of corn, “Bow down, and hail the coming morn.”

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It shouted through the belfry-tower, “Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour.”

It crossed the churchyard with a sigh, And said, “Not yet! in quiet lie.”

THE END

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